917.1
How/Ske
84564
00084564

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.
CLASS

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016

SKETCHES

OF

UPPER CANADA.

Oliver & Boyd, Printers.

SKETCHES

OF

UPPER CANADA,

DOMESTIC,

LOCAL, AND CHARACTERISTIC:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

PRACTICAL DETAILS

FOR THE INFORMATION OF

EMIGRANTS OF EVERY CLASS;

AND SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

84564

By JOHN HOWISON, Esq.

X-d-3

"In vain does the imagination try to roam at large amidst cultivated plains, for every where the habitations of mankind oppose its wish; but in this desert region the soul delights to bury and lose itself amidst boundless forests—it loves to wander, by the light of the stars, on the borders of immense lakes—to hover on the roaring gulf of terrific cataracts—to fall with the mighty mass of waters—to mix and confound itself, as it were, with the wild sublimities of nature."—*Chateaubriand.*

EDINBURGH;

OLIVER & BOYD, HIGH-STREET.

G. & W. B. WHITTAKER, AVE-MARIA-LANE,
LONDON.

1821.

00084564

TO THE READER.

THE following Sketches relate to a country, whose greatest misfortune has been the obscurity in which its peculiar circumstances have tended to involve it, and the ignorance and misconception that have prevailed with respect to its real condition and local advantages. The author does not profess to give a particular account of the present political, commercial, and agricultural state of Upper Canada, much less to treat these important subjects with that minuteness and attention which they eminently deserve; but the details which the ensuing pages contain

will, it is believed, prove acceptable to all descriptions of readers; for, being chiefly of a domestic and personal nature, they will convey a kind of information concerning the country, such as has not hitherto been offered to the public, and such as one could not expect to meet with in a book that is essentially devoted to the consideration of its general circumstances and condition.

The author spent two years and a half in Upper Canada, and, in the course of that time, resided in various parts of the Province. He enjoyed numerous opportunities of inspecting its new settlements; so that all the statements, for the information of emigrants, contained in the fourteenth letter, are the result of personal observation.

The interest that almost all works on North America have recently excited, will, it is hoped, be extended to this, which has some claim upon the public attention, in so far as it relates to the most valuable and important of our colonial possessions in that part of the world.

CONTENTS.

LETTER I.

Montreal—Emigrants landing—Story of the Cabin Boy—Outskirts of Montreal—La Chine—Fine scene there—Calash and Driver—French Canadians—American Innkeeper—St Ann's—River Ottawa—Forests—Appearance of the country and crops—Boy and broad-rimmed hat—Rapids of Les Cedres—Navigation of the St Lawrence, ... 1

LETTER II.

Glengary Settlement—Settler's account of it—Treatment at a private house—Present state of the settlement—Scenery there—Age of the trees—Nature of the soil—Prospects of the settlers—Monotonous scenery—Village of Prescott—Brokeville—Carousing scene there—Tavern and ball-room, ... 18

LETTER III.

Batteaux—Water of the St Lawrence—Its singular effects—Canadian boatmen—Lake of the Thousand Islands—Currents—We land upon an island—False alarm—Deer-hunt by torch-light—Party of Indians arrive—Their dress and behaviour—Supper party—Picturesque groups—A day upon the banks of the St Lawrence—Adventure with a canoe—Tavern, and host and hostess—Mouth of Lake Ontario—View of Kingston Bay, ... 28

LETTER IV.

Pleasures of a good tavern—Town of Kingston—Frigates—Naval depot and armoury—Kingston during the last war—Arrivals of emigrants—Equality and the bricklayer—Steamboat Frontenac—Pleasure of travelling by steam—Lake Ontario—Septennial increase of its waters—Stormy night—Error in the reckoning—Arrival at York,.....42

LETTER V.

Town of York—Disadvantages of its situation—Proposal to remove the seat of government—Re-embark on board the steam-boat—Lake Ontario at night—Spray of Niagara Falls—Village of Niagara—Its amusements—Affecting incident—Reflections on the condition of emigrants—Road to Queenston — Niagara river — Peach orchards—Canadian peasantry,.....55

LETTER VI.

Village of Queenston—Situation—Ferry—Portage—Romantic environs—Heights—Breadth of the Niagara river—Death and character of General Brock—Last American war—Bravery of the Canadians—Effects of the war—Prodigality—Commercial embarrassments—Vanity of the farmers—Tuscorora Indians—Account of their village—Conversation and characters there—Indian hymn—View from Queenston heights—Whirlpool—Thunder storm—Meteorological phenomenon, ...70

LETTER VII.

Niagara Falls—Different views of them—View from the Table Rock—Rainbows—A bold experiment—Appearance of the sheet of water—Noise—Difficult road to the bottom of the cataract—A perilous attempt there—View from the river under the cataract—American Fall—Dimensions of the Falls—People carried over them—Anecdote of an Indian—Wild ducks—Visit to Manchester—Mr Porter's bridge above the Falls—Goat Island—Speculations—Rapids of the Niagara river 91

LETTER VIII.

Scenery above the Falls—Curious mineral spring—Village of Chippowa—Merchants there—Mode of carrying on business—Scarcity of specie—Barter injurious to honesty—Mouth of Lake Erie—Ferry—Town of Buffalo—Lake Erie—Excursion along its shores—Canadian Taverns—Sugar-loaf country—Frog concert—Extraordinary scene at a cottage—Banks of the lake—Wild vines—Story of an Indian woman and child—Grand River Ouse—Naval post there—Lands belonging to the Mohawks—Night scene upon Lake Erie—Interesting Indian, ... 110

LETTER IX.

Lundy's Lane—Orchards—St Catharine's—Salt springs there—A Sunday at St Catharine's—Methodists—Farmers of Upper Canada—Their manners and character—Forests on fire—Emigrants travelling—Yankey and Yorkshireman—

Burlington Bay—Coote's Paradise—Village of Ancaster—Deficiency of churches in Upper Canada—Manufactory of maple sugar—Grand River Ouse—Plaster of Paris—Its use in agriculture—Mohawk village—Indians not susceptible of civilization—Acuteness of their senses—Indian department—Presents—Indian secrets—Major Norton, ... 132

LETTER X.

Long Point—Change of scenery—Perfume from snakes—Fascination—Frog and black snake—Human beings sometimes charmed by serpents—Instances of it—Theory of fascination—Illustrations—Hawk and chickens—Partridges—Human fascination—Story in proof of it—Long Point described—Iron ore and foundery there—Game—Wild pigeons—Sulphurous spring—Night adventure with an Indian—Conversation with him—Coltman's tavern—Effects of a residence in the woods—Sublimities of the forest, ... 153

LETTER XI.

Talbot Settlement—Its founder—Distribution of lands—First occupants of a new settlement—Slow improvement—Condition of the inhabitants of the Talbot Settlement—Emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland—Their clannishness—State of society in the settlement—Natural depravity of Man—State of mind during a residence in the Settlement—Physiognomy of the material world, ... 167

LETTER XII.

Journey to the head of Lake Erie—Picturesque group at a tavern, and characteristics—River Thames—Interesting scene upon it—Delaware village and hotel—The Long Woods—A snow-storm there—Scene in an Indian wigwam—Alarming

accident and subsequent difficulties—Singular means of extrication—Assisted by an Indian—His hospitality—Ward's tavern—Interesting adventure at midnight—Settlement upon the bank of the Thames—Its present state—Mineral oil—Quack doctor and patient—Town of Chatham—Lake St Clair—French Canadians—Climate and fruit upon the Detroit river—Sandwich and Amherstburgh—North-west country—Lakes Huron and Superior,.....179

LETTER XIII.

Departure from Sandwich—Dangers of the bordage—Violent snow-storm—La Vallee's tavern—Company there—Evening's amusement—Scene on Lake St Clair—Effects of intoxication—Sleigh-riding on the ice—Dangers that attend it—Canadian skies—American economy—A new Catholic prohibition—Arnold's mills—Cottage there, and inmates—A walk in the woods—The upper part of the Talbot Settlement—Scarcity of money there—Amusing rencontre and conversation—Death-bed scene—Conclusion of the journey,.....204

LETTER XIV.

Climate of Upper Canada—Winter—Sleigh-riding—Degree of cold—Spring—Summer—Autumn—Indian summer—Improvement of climate from cultivation—Wild fruits—Soil and productions—Price of lands—Expense of clearing them—Rate of labour—Prices of grain and cattle—Taxes—Scarcity of money—Manner of paying labourers—Different classes of emigrants—Peasants and mechanics—Advantages Upper Canada affords them—What descriptions of them succeed best—Directions about embarkation—Expense of the voyage to

Quebec—Plan to be pursued on arriving there—Manner of travelling up the country—Steps to be taken at York—Terms upon which government grants lands—Fees upon grants—Where the emigrant should choose his lands—Things to be attended to in selecting a lot—Plan to be followed by poor emigrants—Different modes of settling—Their comparative advantages—Importance of arriving early in the season—Manner of building a house, and expense—Stock necessary for a new settler—Provisions, and expense of them—Art of chopping soon acquired—Different modes of clearing land—Expense paid by the first crop—Profits of the second—Barn to be erected—Garden to be made—Manner in which settlers assist each other—Their mutual advantages—Different ways of disposing of surplus produce—Occupations during winter—Hauling firewood—Shooting—Mode of life—Articles of diet—Substantial comforts—Advantage of emigrating to Upper Canada—Proofs of this—Fineness of the country—Second class of emigrants—Inducements that the Province offers them—Objections and inconveniences—Emigrants possessing capital—Different ways of employing it—Profits of speculations in land 227

LETTER XV.

Emigration a serious step—Ideas of different people upon the subject—Attractions of Upper Canada—Happiness of its population—State of society in the Province—Favourable to personal importance—Amusements—Field-sports—Equestrian pleasures—Horticulture—Balls and cards—Character of the Canadians—Beauty of the ladies—Emigration recommended to a certain class of persons—A consolatory hint to the ambitious—Conclusion 263

RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

LETTER XVI.

Lewiston—Hatred between the Canadians and Americans—Departure from Lewiston—State of the farmers near it—Conversation at a tavern—Cambria post-office—Driver's account of himself—Story of the methodist priest—*Sang froid* of the Americans exemplified—An American breakfast—Rochester—Gennesee Falls—Clyde Bridge—Grand Canal—Beauties of Canandaguia—Geneva—Reflections—Waterloo village—An American hotel—Cayuga Bridge—Arrival at Auburn—*Table d'hote* there—Specimens of new phraseology—Village described—States prison—Divine service there—Criminals—Their behaviour—Shopkeeper at Weed's port—Canal track-boat—Conversation with the captain—Town of Utica—Cotton manufactory near it—An American stage-coach—Scenery on the Mohawk—A female traveller—Albany—State legislature, and De Witt Clinton—North River steam-boat—Regulations on board—Dinner—High lands of the Hudson—A disappointment—Arrival at New York, ... 273

LETTER XVII.

New York—People on the streets—Blacks—Broadway described—A fashionable promenade—Personal appearance of the ladies—Gentlemen—New York hotels—*Table d'hotes*—Style

of manners at these—Americans indifferent to convivial pleasures—Private boarding-houses—Anniversary of national independence—Festivities of the day—Scene on Broadway—Quietness of the populace—Amusements of New York—Theatre—Vauxhall Gardens—American museum—Wax-work—Apollino—Academy of fine arts—Colonel Trumbull—His pictures and style of painting—Chatham Garden—Steam-boat cotillion parties—American troops—Not respectable—Characteristic anecdote—Military College—American navy—Its high state of discipline—Booksellers' shops—British authors most in repute in America—Circulating libraries—Advantages of New York as a place of residence—Departure from it—East River—First view of Philadelphia—Quakerism—Loungers in Chesnut-street—West's picture—Almshouse and hospital—Regularity of the town—Characteristics of its inhabitants, 312

SKETCHES

OF

UPPER CANADA.

LETTER I.

Montreal—Emigrants landing—Story of the Cabin Boy—Outskirts of Montreal—La Chine—Fine scene there—Calash and Driver—French Canadians—American Innkeeper—St Ann's—River Ottawa—Forests—Appearance of the country and crops—Boy and broad-rimmed hat—Rapids of Les Cedres—Navigation of the St Lawrence.

You may remember, my dear friend, when I promised to present you with occasional sketches of those things that might fall under my observation, after I reached this side of the Atlantic, I did not include Lower Canada in my engagements, as the rapidity with which I expected to pass through it, would, I supposed, prevent me from becoming much acquainted with what it contained, and likewise, because it is infinitely better known, and more familiar to every one, than the sister province. However, before I enter into any details connected with Upper Ca-

nada, I shall give you a superficial account of my journey from Montreal to Glengary, which is the first settlement beyond the boundary-line that divides the two countries. This will enable me to introduce you gradually to the barbarisms of Upper Canada; for were I to plunge suddenly into the woods, and bring you among bears, Indians, and log-huts, your nerves might receive such a shock as would render you timid about continuing longer in my company.

I shall always feel a pleasure in recollecting the time I spent in Montreal. The lightness of the streets, the neatness of the buildings, the hospitality and polished manners of the people, and the air of enterprize and activity that is every where exhibited in it, are truly attractive, and appear to particular advantage when contrasted with the dulness, gloom, and dirtiness of Quebec.

Those individuals of the lower classes that one meets in the streets of Montreal, carry with them an appearance of vigour, contentment, and gayety, very different from the comfortless and desponding looks that characterize the manufacturing population of the large towns of Britain. When in the midst of a crowd, the tone of our feelings often depends more upon the degree of happiness exhibited by those around us, than by what we actually enjoy ourselves; and a man cannot fail to experience a lively pleasure when he walks through

a town, and perceives that a large proportion of its inhabitants are strangers to beggary and wo. The streets of our cities in Britain display such a succession of miserable beings, that one is often inclined, while traversing them, to become inimical to civilization; as half the objects that present themselves afford evidence of the waste of happiness which its purchase occasions. Montreal is as yet a stranger to those miseries which a surplus labouring population never fails to produce, and will probably continue so, as long as vacant lands lie open, in all parts of Canada, for the reception of settlers.

Quebec has much more the appearance of a commercial city than Montreal. At present, comparatively few vessels come up the St Lawrence as far as the latter town, for they cannot move from Quebec unless by the help of the tide, or a strong breeze directly astern. But the tide flows only to Three Rivers, about sixty miles below Montreal, and when they have gained this place, they must lie at anchor until a favourable wind enables them to stem the current, which is very rapid. However, six steam-boats now ply between the two cities, and transport all sorts of lading much more safely and expeditiously than square-rigged vessels can do.

One morning, I observed a ship and two brigs entering the harbour, and on going down to the

river some time afterwards, I witnessed the interesting spectacle of the disembarkation of a number of British emigrants. The greater part were from Scotland, as I quickly discovered, and a seven weeks passage across the Atlantic did not appear to have divested them of a single national peculiarity; but their robust forms were a little reduced by the sickness and confinement attendant upon a long voyage. It amused me to observe how the officiousness of the Canadian porters was damped by the watchfulness and suspicion of the Highlanders; many an active Canadian, who had lifted a trunk upon his shoulders, with the intention of putting it in his little cart, was stopped by the alarmed owner, and divested of his burden, amidst abusive exclamations in Gaelic. Most of the emigrants had families, and the children formed a large part of the groupe. However, I observed several grandfathers and grandmothers, who, though feeble from age and infirmity, had accompanied their offspring thus far in their voyage to the *terra incognita* of Upper Canada. They looked round with disconsolate and inquiring eyes, and if any feature in the appearance of the town chanced to resemble some part of their native village or city, it caused a joyful exclamation, and was eagerly pointed out to the notice of the whole crowd.

The vessel in which I had come across the

Atlantic lay near the quay, and on approaching her, I observed a constable having in custody two fellows whom I remembered having seen during the voyage. In extreme poverty, and anxious to get to America, they had concealed themselves in the hold a few days before the vessel sailed; but hunger soon compelled them to make their appearance on deck, and supplicate for provisions. The captain, of course, received them very ungraciously (for any shipmaster, having on board his vessel persons whose names are not inserted in the list examined by the custom-house officer before he leaves port, is liable to a penalty of one hundred pounds); however, he allowed them small rations; but they were not satisfied with these, and displayed the atrocity of their characters in the means they employed to obtain more. There was a young cabin-boy on board, who had formerly been a shepherd, and this being his first voyage, he was altogether untainted with the vices of a sea life. Destitute of guile, he fell a prey to these men, who, by means of whipping and menaces, made him steal provisions for them from the store-room, to which he had frequent access; but these thefts being soon discovered, a severe punishment was inflicted by the captain upon this miserable boy. His feelings were hardened, and he became an adept in deceit and petty roguery. I shall never forget the counte-

nance of one of those wretches who forced him to commit theft, for it was not the face of a common villain. This fiend and his companion were strongly suspected of having evaded the laws of their native country, and were therefore placed under the charge of a constable, that they might undergo an examination.

Montreal improves with great rapidity, and will soon contain some very pretty streets. Its suburbs and outskirts are embellished by numerous villas, built in the English style, and many of these are surrounded by pleasure grounds, the variety and beauty of which, prove the wealth and taste of their owners. The inhabitants of this city possess much liberality of sentiment, which they alike display in their hospitality to strangers, in their mode of life, and in their mercantile transactions; and they lay out their money with a spirit, and an ardour for improvement, which is by no means common among those who reside in small commercial towns.

In travelling from Montreal to La Chine, a village nine miles further up the St Lawrence, I could not but remark the warm and glowing appearance which every part of the country exhibited. The air was so pure and transparent, that every beam of the sun seemed to reach the earth in unimpaired brilliancy, quickening the luxuriant verdure that covered the fields, trees, and

shrubbery. Beautiful and improved farms lay on each side of the road; and instead of being immured among forests, as I had anticipated, I saw extensive tracts of land waving in all the gayety and loveliness of harvest.

After an amusing ride, which lasted more than an hour, I stopped at La Chine. There is a portage between the two places, for the Rapids of the St Lawrence interrupt the navigation, and consequently all stores and goods, intended for the upper country, are conveyed from Montreal to La Chine by land. At the latter place, they are put into flat-bottomed boats, called *batteaux*, which are rowed up the river, with incredible labour, by Canadians, whom the forwarders engage at a certain sum during the season. La Chine is thus rendered a place of some importance, which otherwise it would not be; but still it merely consists of a few dwelling houses, and several large stores for the reception of the goods. This village is agreeably situated upon the St Lawrence, which expands into a breadth of several miles, and forms what the Canadians term Lake St Louis. The sun was just setting when I contemplated this scene. Not a sound could be heard, but the dull paddling of a canoe which had just left the shore. The picturesque dresses of the Indians who sat in it, the glittering of their tomahawks, and the figure of the chief, as he

stood erect, appearing almost gigantic from the state of the horizon, were all impressive in the highest degree. There is something powerfully affecting in the scenery of a foreign country. Any trivial object, if peculiar to it, will render the mind susceptible of receiving increased emotion from other features, which might have before been so familiar, that they scarcely excited any at all. Often had I contemplated lakes and forests with something like indifference, but the mere introduction of the Indian canoe awakened me to a new feeling concerning them.

I remained all night at La Chine, and at an early hour next morning, was provided with another calash and driver. This man possessed a most happy disposition, and was altogether so free and *degagé* in his manner, that he afforded me much amusement. Though a carpenter by trade, he kept a calash for the accommodation of travellers, and would either *drive* a horse or a nail, as best suited his purpose. The Canadian post-horses are in appearance the most wretched animals imaginable, being lank, clumsy, and rough-coated; but they become both active and spirited under the influence of the whip, which their drivers generally use very freely. I believe no member of the Four-in-hand Club, when mounted on the box, feels more elated than the Canadian peasant does while driving his sorry

horse and shackling chariot. He is all life and gayety, and talks to his horse and to the traveller alternately. He points out the beauties of the prospect, and if the carriage or harness gives way, he dismounts and repairs it, regains his seat, and dashes on. He relieves his horse by walking up every hill, and compliments himself upon this sacrifice, by calling to the animal, "*Ah pauvre cheval! Vous avez un bon maitre,*" &c. The Canadian peasantry display a native politeness, a presence of mind, and a degree of address, which, though extremely pleasing, sometimes betray their possessors into too much familiarity; however, there is so much gayety and sentiment in these mistakes, that one cannot but heartily excuse them. My drivers always shook hands with me, and wished me a good journey, before we parted, and they sometimes politely asked me to join them in drinking a glass of cider. The Canadians are dark-complexioned, and generally meagre, although rather athletic. Their eyes are small, sparkling, and animated; but none of the men have any pretensions to personal beauty.

I stopped to breakfast at a beautiful spot called St Anns. The Grand River Ottawa, in the midst of which is the island of Perrot, here joins the St Lawrence. I now, for the first time, had an opportunity of observing the manners of an American innkeeper of the lower order. Gentle-

men of this description, in their anxiety to display a noble spirit of *independence*, sometimes forget those courtesies that are paid to travellers by publicans in all civilized countries; but the moment one shews his readiness to be on an equality with them, they become tolerably polite. I found the *maitre d'hotel* at St Ann's seated at his door, poising his chair on its hind legs, and swinging backwards and forwards. He took no notice of me when I alighted from the calash, nor when I walked into the house; no—not even when I desired him to get breakfast ready. But I had forgot myself—"Will you have the goodness," said I, "to order breakfast for me, if convenient?" "Immediately, squire," replied he, as he rose from his chair, and shewed me into an apartment.

In a short time my host returned, and having seated himself beside me, entered into familiar conversation, and inquired into my affairs, respecting which I did not fail to give him such information as put his curiosity upon the rack. At first, the familiarities of the tavern-keepers used to irritate me a good deal; but afterwards they only appeared ridiculous, and as it was necessary to submit to them, I found it my interest to do so with as good a grace as possible.

Having been thoroughly scrutinized by "mine host," I was conducted into a neat room, where an excellent breakfast awaited me. The house

was situated in the midst of an orchard, and the boughs, loaded with blossoms, clustered round the window, through which I had a view of the Grand River Ottawa, rolling majestically, and glittering in the sun. In the midst of the river was the island of Perrot, so luxuriantly wooded, that the foliage of the trees descended to the surface of the water, and completely concealed the bank on which they grew. Numerous birds fluttered in the sunshine, sometimes plunging into the bosom of the forest, sometimes issuing from its recesses to revel upon the surface of the water; and the king-fisher, with orient plumage, would often spring out of the thick copse, like a fragment of the rainbow darting from behind a dark cloud. All was glorious, animated, and beautiful.

It is necessary to cross the Ottawa here, and the intervention of the island of Perrot occasions a double ferry, and, as it were, divides the river into two branches. We crossed the first branch, which is about a quarter of a mile broad, on a raft. I then resumed my seat in the calash, and we drove along an excellent road, and were soon completely embowered in the forest. My situation was new and interesting in the highest degree, for I had never before experienced the sublimity of a *real* forest, nor witnessed a succession of trees of such magnitude and beauty. Im-

mense oaks grew so close to each side of the road, that the intervening space was merely wide enough to admit the passage of the calash without difficulty. The thick recesses of the shade around, were impenetrable to the eye, the limited prospect being closed by a rich green obscurity, except where a ray of the sun found its way through some distant interstice among the trees, and betrayed the glittering waters of a rivulet, or the inviting freshness of a green bank.

On reaching the opposite side of St Perrot, we again embarked in a raft, and were conveyed across the other branch of the Ottawa, and landed upon the continent of America.

The country, through which we now passed, was open, level, and in a high state of cultivation. Red wheat, buck wheat, rye, and Indian corn, were the principal kinds of grain to be met with; but I saw several fields of excellent barley, and oats were not unfrequent, though they seemed to be stinted in growth, and of inferior quality. But, notwithstanding the fine crops, one might easily perceive, that the British system of husbandry was not pursued, for the lands were indifferently ploughed, and for the most part overrun with weeds. The potatoes and turnips were carelessly put in, and had evidently received no attention afterwards. With respect to farming,

I believe, the French Canadians are fully as bigotted as the lower orders of our Scotch agriculturists; for, like the latter, when any innovation is proposed, they invariably refer to the practice of their ancestors, and often act alike against interest and evidence.

The houses of the Canadian farmers are almost all formed of wood. The proprietors display no taste whatever in selecting sites for their dwellings, which are as often placed in a swamp as on a dry eminence, and never have a tree near them, if it is possible to avoid it. There is no difficulty in explaining the cause of the aversion with which the Canadians regard trees. Their earliest labour is that of chopping them down—they present on every side an obstacle to the improvement of their farms—and, even after the land is cultivated, the roots and stumps impede ploughing, and other field occupations. What would be the conceptions of an uninformed Canadian, were he told, that the Agricultural Society in England give a reward, annually, to the person who plants the greatest number of trees?

The country continued extremely level, and perfectly dry, with the exception of a few scattered marshy spots. But the fields, though smooth, had no regularity of form, and were divided by wooden fences. This is annoying to the eyes of a British traveller, who has been ac-

customed to see lands enclosed with thorn hedges; for the animation and variety they communicate to an open and cultivated country, can only be estimated, by contemplating a prospect of which they do not form a part.

The road was enlivened with carriages of various descriptions, but I saw very few foot passengers. Almost every farmer is able to keep what is called an *establishment*, viz. a horse and calash, and indeed the heat in Lower Canada, during summer, is so extreme, that no person attempts to walk any distance except from necessity; therefore one seldom sees any of those humble half-gentleman pedestrians, that are so often to be met with on the public roads in Britain, dressed in tarnished clothes, and carrying bundles over their shoulders, suspended from the end of their walking-sticks.

I was much struck with the politeness of the common Canadians. They never passed without uncovering; and when two drivers came within call, they always saluted each other by the word *monsieur*. The children make a low obeisance to every genteel stranger; and I cannot help mentioning a trifling incident which was occasioned by this custom. A little boy, who had apparently just begun to walk, stood at the door of a cottage, with an immense broad-rimmed hat upon his head. When I approached, he took it off and

bowed, but in attempting to regain the erect posture, he found the weight of his *chapeau* too great, and fell forward on his face, but without receiving any injury. I thought at the moment, that it would have been well if the British government had furnished Lord Amherst with a hat of this description, to be used on his first audience with the Emperor of China. It would have occasioned a prostration highly gratifying to his Majesty, and from its being entirely accidental, of course quite satisfactory to our administration.

I now began to think the scenery a little monotonous, when a sudden turn of the road brought us again upon the banks of the St Lawrence, and to the Rapids of Les Cedres, which present one perturbed expanse of foam, rushing over a rocky bed with terrific grandeur and vehemence. The river is half a mile broad here, and such is the rapidity of the current, that the water, when it strikes against the projecting rocks, is thrown up in large jets many feet high. The channel must be composed of immense jutting and fantastic-shaped rocks, for the river is so torn and convulsed by the inequalities over which it is whirled, that it presents an appearance truly frightful. Distinct bodies of water appear to dispute the passage, and to rush against each other, without intermingling. In some places, the stream glides

in a state of glassy smoothness over beds of stone, till, impeded by fragments of rock, it is dashed into a state of comminution, and partly whirled into the air in clouds of spray, and in these, miniature rainbows may be seen forming and disappearing at intervals. The middle of the Rapids is occupied by a small island, which, being richly wooded, adds much to the splendour of the scene.

Notwithstanding the dangerous nature of these Rapids, the Canadians pass down with boats and rafts almost every day, and very few accidents happen; but when a boat does fill, or upset, the crew inevitably perish.

The inhabitants of Lower Canada propose to render the navigation of St Lawrence uninterrupted, by cutting canals at those places where the Rapids impede it. This is quite practicable, but I fear there are not wealth and public spirit enough in the two provinces for such an arduous undertaking. I say the two provinces, because the inhabitants of both would in an equal degree be benefited by any improvement in the navigation of that river, which ministers in so great a degree to their mutual convenience and prosperity. However, an incorporated company have lately undertaken to cut a canal between Montreal and La Chine, the expense of which is estimated at £80,000 Sterling. It will be about

eleven miles in length, and will receive a supply of water from the St Lawrence. The trade between Upper and Lower Canada is at present so great, that the stockholders in the concern confidently believe, that a large dividend will become due to them in the course of three or four years after the canal has been completed.

LETTER II.

Glengary Settlement—Settler's account of it—Treatment at a private house—Present state of the settlement—Scenery there—Age of the trees—Nature of the soil—Prospects of the settlers—Monotonous scenery—Village of Prescott—Brokeville—Carousing scene there—Tavern and ball-room.

I SHALL now introduce you to the Upper Province, and for the present dismiss the polished and interesting peasantry of Lower Canada, that I may make you acquainted with the blunt and uncultivated inhabitants of Glengary, which is the first regular settlement in the Upper Province, and contains a large proportion of Scotch, as you may conceive from its national appellation.

I entered the settlement in the evening, and the first person I met was a common labourer, whistling and walking gaily along, with his axe over his shoulder. I accosted him, and had some conversation with him, in the course of which he informed me, that he had commenced farming two years before, not being then possessed of subsistence for two months; but things had prospered with him, and he now owned a house, three cows, several sheep, and seven acres of very fine wheat. He seemed in high spirits, and conclud-

ed his narrative with wishing, that his countrymen could be made acquainted with the advantages which Upper Canada afforded to the poor.

This account filled me with high expectations, and the more so, as I had been told that the upper part of the settlement was in a state of rapid advancement. I therefore hoped to see my countrymen elevated in their characters, and improved in their manners, by the influence of independence, and stopped at a private house, which my driver had recommended as being much superior to the tavern. Here I found a large family devouring pork and onions, and a room containing as much dirt as it could conveniently hold. I had scarcely passed the threshold, when I was importuned by signs to take my seat on the head of a cask, and helped abundantly to the family fare. Resistance was vain, as none of the party seemed to understand a word of English, and I suppose my unwillingness to join in the repast was attributed to *false modesty*.

The evening being far advanced, I was obliged to resolve upon remaining with them all night. After listening for a couple of hours to Gaelic, I followed the landlord to my bed-room; but, the moment he opened the door, a cloud of musquitoes and other insects settled upon the candle, and extinguished it. He made signs that I should remain a few moments in the dark;

but I followed him down stairs, and firmly declined paying another visit to the apartment intended for me, as it seemed to be already occupied.

As our road lay through the Glengary settlement, I had an opportunity next morning of seeing it, and was rather disappointed, the improvements bearing no proportion to what I had anticipated. The majority of its inhabitants were indeed very poor when they commenced their labours, and had a variety of discouraging circumstances to contend with, the principal of which were, the peculiarities of the climate, the almost inaccessible situation of their farms, the badness of the roads, and the immense woods which encumbered the soil. They have, in some degree, surmounted the greater number of these difficulties; but still the settlement is not in a very flourishing state, and its inhabitants seem too unambitious to profit by the advantages of their condition. A very great majority of the houses are built of logs, and contain only one apartment; and the possessors display no inclination to improve their mode of life, being dirty, ignorant, and obstinate. Few of the settlers have more than sixty or seventy acres cleared, and the generality only thirty or forty; yet, how many comforts, and even luxuries, might persons of moderate industry derive from a domain of this extent!

While they were preparing breakfast, at the tavern at which I had stopped, I strolled out for amusement. Diminutive log-houses, surrounded with a few acres of cleared land, presented themselves in various directions, and the feeble vestiges of civilization which these objects exhibited, seemed to be derided by the clumps of immense oaks that every where waved their colossal boughs as if threatening destruction to all below. A profusion of decayed and half-burnt timber lay around, and the serpentine roots of trees, blown down by tempests, stretched into the air, in the most fantastic forms. In different places, piles of blazing timber sent forth columns of smoke, which enveloped the forests far and wide. Axes rung in every thicket, and the ear was occasionally startled by the crashing of trees falling to the ground. I attempted to ascertain the age of an oak, that had recently been cut down, by counting the circumgirations of the wood, and found it had flourished at least two hundred and sixty-seven years. Its size, however, was very moderate, when compared with that of many others which grew beside it, and which, from their dimensions, I judged to be five or six hundred years old.

The surface here, to the depth of several inches, is composed almost entirely of decayed vegetable matter. The withered leaves, strewed

by every autumn, speedily decompose and unite with the soil, and a thin layer being thus added annually, a stratum of considerable thickness is soon formed, which has hitherto been allowed, in most places, to accumulate without disturbance from the plough or harrow. Fallen trees likewise add a great deal to the surface by their decomposition; they may be observed in all stages of decay, from simple rottenness to that of absolute desintegration. A soil of this description, as you may easily conceive, is rather too rich for the common purposes of agriculture; and consequently the first crops never are so good as those that follow. As a proof of its luxuriant quality, I may mention, that two fields were pointed out to me which had been cropped twenty-one years in succession, without receiving any manure whatever. That part of the soil which has been some time under cultivation, presents an appearance superior to any thing of the kind I have ever seen; being formed entirely of a rich black loam resting upon a bed of clay. This combination is peculiarly adapted for agricultural purposes, as it possesses the double advantage of being easily worked, and, under proper management, not capable of exhaustion.

Indeed, were it not for the uncommon richness of the soil, which yields profusely almost without cultivation, the settlers could not obtain

a subsistence from their farms until after many years occupation. In sowing wheat, they use the small proportion of one bushel, and one bushel and a half, to the acre. In England, three are required. This extraordinary difference can alone be accounted for by supposing, that, in Upper Canada, the fertility of the ground causes every individual grain to germinate and come to maturity.

If I were merely a theorist, and omitted to take into consideration the influence which the character of the inhabitants of Glengary must necessarily have upon the prosperity of their settlement, I might say that their present condition afforded rather a pleasing subject of contemplation. Provided the slow, but progressive improvement, of the country, is not interrupted by a second war or any other political circumstance, every farmer will certainly soon become independent. This may possibly produce an amelioration in their manners and habits, which are at present sufficiently uncouth, and likewise, perhaps, an ambition to distinguish themselves by other qualities than those of prudence and industry. The means of education, now very limited, must increase with the settlement; and the children of its present inhabitants, if allowed to enjoy the advantages of intellectual cultivation, will be raised several degrees in the scale of society, and their

descendants, possessing superior opportunities still, will triumph over rusticity and ignorance, and become respectable alike from their circumstances and their acquirements.

I travelled upwards of sixty miles, after leaving the Glengary settlement, without observing any thing remarkable in the country through which I passed, or meeting with a single adventure that is worthy of notice. Half-cultivated fields, log-houses, and extensive forests, all along composed the monotonous scene, except when an occcasional glance at the St Lawrence relieved the eye, and awakened in the mind hopes of soon enjoying a more animated prospect. The scenery of Upper Canada is rather destitute of variety and interest. A level country, when in a high state of cultivation, and embellished with villas, gardens, and pleasure-grounds, may appear both beautiful and picturesque, but without these objects, it must always afford a dull and unvaried prospect.

There are two small villages, situated on the bank of the St Lawrence, within twelve miles of each other, called Prescott and Brokeville.—Prescott contains twenty or thirty houses, and likewise a mud fort, which is occupied by a few soldiers. Within the fort stands a block-house, proof against musketry. The cannon, planted upon the mud wall which encircles it, are so

fixed, that an enemy, although in possession of the ramparts, could not turn them upon the besieged without much labour and difficulty, while he would be completely exposed to the discharge of small arms from numerous loop-holes in the block-house. This place is called Fort Wellington, and was a position of some importance during the last war. The officer in command would not admit me within the walls, until he had ascertained that I was not an American; but this precaution has been quite ineffectual in excluding our rivals, for individuals, belonging to the army of the United States, have repeatedly visited and examined this fort.

Prescott, although no more than a village at present, must eventually become a place of some importance, for it may be termed the head of the schooner and sloop navigation. If proper canals are cut at the Rapids in the Lower Province, schooners, and even square-rigged vessels, will find no difficulty in plying between Montreal and Prescott; but they cannot go farther, as, from the latter place to Kingston, a distance of fifty-five miles, the channel of the river is so obstructed, and the current so rapid, that small steam-boats, or flat-bottomed craft, could alone navigate it with safety. Prescott must thus be made a depot for all the merchandize sent to the western parts of the province, and likewise

for all the produce forwarded from thence to Montreal.

The opinion and recommendation of an experienced traveller, induced me to discharge my carriage at Brokeville, and determine upon proceeding to Kingston by water. The road, I was told, was extremely bad, and the face of the country almost a *fac simile* of what I had seen, consequently I felt no inclination to follow the land route.

I accordingly secured a passage in a *bateau*, and in the evening, after it got dark, I strolled to the side of the river, that I might ascertain whether or not my baggage was safely put on board; and there I found the crew carousing after the fatigues of the day. They had kindled a fire upon the beach, and were making ready supper. Some reclined around the fire, talking barbarous French, and uttering the most horrid oaths; others sat in the boats, and sung troubadour songs; and a third party was engaged in distributing the provisions. They resembled a band of freebooters. Most of them were very athletic, and had the sharp physiognomy and sparkling eyes of a Canadian. The red glare of the fire communicated additional animation to their rude features; and their bushy black beards, and discordant voices, rendered them rather a formidable-looking set of people.

After my return to the tavern, my host conducted me up to the second story of his hotel, and into a large room, nearly fifty feet long, and broad in proportion. I could imperfectly distinguish, by the feeble light of a single candle, that there was a bed in each corner of it, and at the same time, I heard distant stertorous murmurs, which seemed to proceed from the lungs of some person who was asleep. My attendant informed me that the apartment was a ball-room, and as it occupied the whole upper floor, he had no bedchambers in his house. I inquired if dances frequently took place there: "Well, I guess not," said he, "but I calculate upon there being one next winter; in these low times people a'nt so *spry** as they used to be." I have since found that very many inns are built upon the same principle as that at Brokeville. To have a ball-room seems to be the height of every publican's ambition in Upper Canada, and the convenience, comfort, and symmetry, of their houses are often sacrificed, that they may be able to furnish accommodations for a dancing party once a-year.

* Lively.

LETTER III.

Batteaux—Water of the St Lawrence—Its singular effects—Canadian boatmen—Lake of the Thousand Islands—Currents—We land upon an island—False alarm—Deer-hunt by torch-light—Party of Indians arrive—Their dress and behaviour—Supper party—Picturesque groups—A day upon the banks of the St Lawrence—Adventure with a canoe—Tavern, and host and hostess—Mouth of Lake Ontario—View of Kingston Bay.

EARLY in the morning, I found the boatmen preparing to leave port. There were five batteaux, and this number constitutes a brigade. The crew of each boat consisted of five rowers, and a man with a paddle to steer; and the whole equipment was under the command and superintendence of an individual who was styled the *conductor*.

The freshness of the morning breeze was rendered truly delightful by the odour proceeding from young pine trees, which grew in profusion on each side of the river; and as the sun rose, every little gale that shook the dew-drops from their branches, seemed to scatter a thousand gems upon the bosom of the St Lawrence. The noise of the oars sometimes startled the deer which were browzing along the banks, and I occasion-

ally saw them thrust their beautiful heads through the branches, and then suddenly start away into the recesses of the forest.

The water of the river is exquisitely pure and transparent, and, when it sparkles round the oars, one is almost induced to drink it, whether he feels thirsty or not. The effects which it produces on those unaccustomed to its use, are rather difficult to account for. It occasions nausea, pain in the stomach, and diarrhœa; but the boatmen, who use it every day, never experience any of those effects. Several gentlemen who live in the western parts of Upper Canada, and are in the habit of going to Montreal once a-year, told me, that they regularly had an attack of the kind I have described during their passage down, but never suffered at all on their way back again. These effects probably proceed from the extreme softness of the water, which, being mingled together in such prodigious quantities, and exposed so long to the influence of the sun, loses its carbonic acid, and likewise the greater part of the atmospheric air that is loosely combined with it.

After rowing nearly two hours, we landed upon a small island, and the boatmen began to make ready breakfast for themselves. They take a meal regularly every four hours during the four and twenty, and it is to be supposed that the

great labour they undergo must create a proportionable appetite; but it does seem astonishing that they should be contented with the quality of the provisions they subsist upon. Pork, pease-soup, and biscuit, compose their daily fare; and though they give their meals the appellations of breakfast, dinner, &c. this distinction is founded upon the time at which they are taken, not upon the difference of the articles presented at each. But, notwithstanding all this, they are the happiest race of people imaginable. Inured to hardship, they despise it; and after toiling at the oar during the whole day, and lightening their labour with songs and jests, when night comes, they kindle a fire and sleep around it, in defiance of the elements and every thing else.

The men having refreshed themselves, took to their oars with alacrity, and we again stemmed the translucent surges of the St Lawrence. There is something so wearisome and depressing in the steady unvaried motion of the batteaux, and the regular noise of the oars, that when the banks of the river presented no variety, I often felt an uncontrolable desire to sleep, though I had been particularly warned to resist any inclination of the kind, because an indulgence in it would produce the ague; however, the fear of an attack was not strong enough to enable me to keep my eyes open, and I enjoyed several slum-

bers, in the course of the passage, without experiencing any bad consequences.

We now entered that part of the river which is called the Lake of the Thousand Islands. The St Lawrence expands into a large basin, the bosom of which is diversified by myriads of islands, and these are characterized by every conceivable aspect of nature, being fertile, barren, lofty, low, rocky, verdurous, wooded, and bare. They vary in size as much as in form. Some are a quarter of a mile long, and others only a few yards; and, I believe, they collectively exhibit, on a small scale, a greater variety of bays, harbours, inlets, and channels, than are to be found throughout the whole continent of America. Nature seems here to have thrown sportively from her hand a profusion of masses of the material world, that she might perceive what combinations of scenery would be produced, when they assumed their respective positions on the bosom of the waters.

The number of islands has never been correctly ascertained, but it is generally supposed to exceed seventeen hundred. Many of them are of little value, being covered with scraggy pine, and having no depth of soil; and, I believe, any person whose romantic fancy might inspire him with the desire of possessing one, would find no difficulty in getting it granted by government.

But some of the larger islands would form delightful little farms; and the energies of a future people may perhaps bring them under cultivation, and embellish them with all the beauties that arts and agriculture can communicate. When this takes place, the scene will realize all that fairy loveliness in which eastern historians have delighted to robe the objects of the material world.

The scene reminded me of the beautiful description of the Happy Islands in the Vision of Mirzah, and I thought at the time, that if the Thousand Islands lay in the East, some chaste imagination would propose, that they should be made an asylum for suffering humanity, and distributed according to the respective virtues and merits of those who deserved them.

The current between some of the islands is so rapid, that the boatmen, with all their exertions, can scarcely make way against it. There are particular channels with which the Canadians are well acquainted, and which they invariably follow, for if they ventured upon others, they would soon be bewildered among the islands, and might probably continue in search of the true course during many days, as has several times been the case.

Shortly after sunset we landed upon a small island, and the Canadians having moored their

boats, proceeded to make a fire, as they intended to enjoy themselves for several hours. We were just opening a basket of provisions when we were all startled by hearing shouts, which apparently proceeded from people on the other side of the island. The ruddy glare of a fire likewise attracted our attention, and the continuance of the cries induced several boatmen to hasten to the spot where the light seemed to be. My imagination was instantly excited, and when I heard the wind whistling among the trees, and the perturbed waters of the St Lawrence dashing against the island, and saw a lurid sky stretched above me, the most alarming impressions crowded upon my mind. All the stories I had heard of the horrible atrocities often committed by the Indians rose in my memory, and I already conceived that I saw my companions tomahawked, and their mangled bodies struggling convulsively among the whelming surges of the river.

However, the return of the Canadians put an end to my fears. The supposed Indians were no other than the crew of a brigade of batteaux, and the shouts we heard were raised in consequence of their having seen three deer, in the pursuit of which they requested us to join. This proposal was acceded to by all parties, and some began to kindle large fires in several parts of the island, while others stript the hickory tree of its

bark, and made torches. Thus prepared we sallied forth, some carrying arms, and the others being provided with blazing flambeaux. Intending to surround the deer, and gradually close upon them, we dispersed into a large circle, and sent two dogs among the brushwood to rouse the game, which they soon accomplished, and we accordingly made regular encroachments upon their precincts. The deer, when they saw themselves thus environed, sprung from one side to the other, leaped into the air, reared upon their hind-legs, and at last sunk down apparently in despair; but upon the discharge of a couple of fowling-pieces, they again started, and having escaped our circle, plunged into the river.

Several of the boatmen had remained upon the banks of the island, that they might prevent the deer from taking the river; but when they found this impracticable, they shouted to us and ran to the batteaux, and immediately unmoored them. The remainder of the crew soon followed, with arms and torches, and they all rowed out in pursuit of the game. Nothing could be more brilliant and picturesque than the scene which succeeded. We saw the heads and antlers of the beautiful animals moving with graceful rapidity upon the surface of the water, while the brightness of their eyes rivalled that of the transparent drops which sparkled around them. When the

shouts of the crew and the dashing of the oars assailed their ears, the exertions they made to escape were inconceivably strong—sometimes raising themselves almost entirely out of the water, and sometimes springing forward several yards at one leap. The bustle among the boats, the glare of the torches, and the ferocious countenances of the crew, were finely contrasted with the meekness and timidity of the deer, and the whole effect was heightened by the islands around, the wild and romantic features of which were strikingly displayed at intervals, when the ruddy light of the torches happened to fall upon them.

Several shots were fired, though apparently without effect, and I began fervently to hope that the deer might escape. Two of them eluded their pursuers, but the batteaux surrounded the other, and the Canadians beat it to death with their oars, and, having taken it on board, returned to the shore.

While we were around the fire, dividing the booty, two canoes, full of Indians, suddenly emerged from behind a point of land, and steered directly towards us. The women were seated, but the men stood erect, and managed their paddles with the utmost elegance and dexterity. Their heads were adorned with steel crescents and waving feathers. The rest of their dress

consisted of the skins of wild beasts, and long scarlet cloaks covered with ornaments, which, though mere tinsel, had a very shining effect. This was the first time I ever heard the Indian language, and never could its harsh and fantastic sounds have been more impressive to any one than they were to me, surrounded as I was with objects the most wild and uncivilized in their character.

These unexpected visitors landed near us, but seemed not at all incommoded by our presence, for the women immediately began to cut fire-wood, and their husbands having collected a few poles and some birch bark, set about making a wigwam. At my request, some venison and spirits were sent them, which they received with many acknowledgments.

Assisted by my fellow-passengers, I now spread a table, and obtained the necessary furnishings from our respective provision baskets. Our repast proved both a comfortable and an amusing one. On one side, were the Canadians loitering round the fire in different groups, some half asleep and others singing and wrestling with their comrades; while a few attempted to read a half worn-out French hymn-book, the devout expressions in which were heard at intervals among the oaths that proceeded from almost every mouth. On the other side, we saw the Indians seated under

their wigwam, and dressing their venison. The rum they had drank began to affect them. The men looked ferocious, sharpened their tomahawks, and occasionally uttered the war-whoop. The women talked incessantly, and their children played the Jew's harp. Our party completed the group; and, though our voices were almost drowned amidst the confusion of tongues, a spectator would easily have ascertained, that at least three different languages were spoken on the island.

About four in the morning we again took to our boats, and soon passed the termination of the Lake of the Thousand Islands. However, a strong westerly wind began to prevail, and rendered the working of the batteaux so very laborious, that the crew were obliged to rest a little every half hour. The Canadians row at the rate of three miles an hour when the weather is perfectly calm, and, of course, rather more when they have a favourable breeze to assist them; but, at best, they never go further than thirty miles in twenty-four hours. The average length of the passage from La Chine to Kingston is seven days.

The wind at length became so strong, that we resolved to stop until it moderated. As the day was extremely hot, we remained upon the bank of the river, and constructed a small tent of sails

and oil-cloth to protect us from the sun, and laid down under its shade; however, I soon got tired of this, and having left my companions asleep, I walked out alone. The sunshine was so intense, that the St Lawrence sparkled too bright for the eye to bear, and at each step I took, a thousand insects sprung from the flowers on which they had been feeding. I wandered along the side of the river, until I reached a little bay paved with smooth rock, against which the glittering waves broke in rapid succession. Here I found a canoe tied to a tree. Having embarked in it, I paddled out from the shore, and laid down at my ease, and committed myself to the guidance of the current. The influence of the heat and scenery was overpowering, and I fell into a half slumber. I was occasionally awakened to a consciousness of my situation, by the radiant flashes which were shot forth by the sun-dipt wings of the humming birds, as they flew over me. My mind was in a state of perfect quiescence. The most dazzling and enthusiastic conceptions rose in it without effort, and faded away without resistance. Had a super-human voice told me that I was entering the vortex of the most terrific Rapids, I believe I would scarcely have had energy to ascertain whether it was so or not.

When I returned to my companions, I found that they had just been awakened from a pro-

found sleep by the fall of the tent, and, as they would not take the trouble to erect it again, we all walked to a tavern at a little distance from the shore. This tavern consisted of two rooms, and was built of logs, and had a sign swinging before the door, so covered with gilt and emblematic paintings, that it probably cost more than the house itself. We inquired of the landlord if we could get any thing to eat, and he asked in reply if we were from the United States. We repeated the question, but he answered that he did not know. However, after waiting a quarter of an hour, we were conducted into the second room, and there found a table amply furnished with tea, beef-steaks, cucumbers, potatoes, honey, onions, eggs, &c. During this delectable repast, we were attended by the hostess, who poured out the tea as often as we required it, and having done so, seated herself in the door-way, and read a book (which I afterwards found to be *Miss Edgeworth's Tales of Fashionable Life*), while her husband, who was a tall raw-boned fellow, occasionally entered the room, and stood gazing upon us for several minutes, with his hands in his pockets, and his hat stuck upon one side of his head.

About sunset the wind fell completely, and the boatmen again set forward, in the confident hope of reaching Kingston early next morning.

Nothing remarkable occurred during the night. When we were half a mile below the town, a sudden turn of the river brought into view the mouth of Lake Ontario, and though the scene itself was not imposing, yet the reflections it produced were replete with splendour. The mind involuntarily traversed the waters of those immense lakes, which have their source in mysterious and unexplored regions far beyond the bounds of civilization, and supply a mighty river with resistless and unceasing torrents. Every drop which fell from the oars had perhaps been once agitated by tempests in the bosom of Lake Michigan or Superior.

Kingston Bay was for some time concealed from our sight by a projecting point of land; but when we had cleared this, the dockyard and shipping came into view all at once. In one direction, the great war ship St Lawrence, and several frigates, floated at anchor, as if guardians of the town, which rose indistinctly behind them, and in another, two unfinished seventy-fours lay on the stocks. The wind whistled drearily through the chinks in their sides, which had long since ceased to vibrate under the hammer of the carpenter. The whole scene was magical in its effect. We had seen nothing but rocks, forests, and uninhabited islands, during two days, every thing appearing to indicate that we had passed

the confines of civilization; but we now found ourselves in an emporium of busy life, and saw vessels of war floating on those waters, whose surfaces, we might well have previously supposed, had never been traversed by any bark larger than an Indian canoe.

LETTER IV.

Pleasures of a good tavern—Town of Kingston—Frigates—Naval depot and armoury—Kingston during the last war—Arrivals of emigrants—Equality and the bricklayer—Steamboat Frontenac—Pleasure of travelling by steam—Lake Ontario—Septennial increase of its waters—Stormy night—Error in the reckoning—Arrival at York.

I SHALL now take leave of the St Lawrence, and vary the scene, by introducing you to the inhabitants of Kingston, and leading you a ramble through their town, which is the largest in Upper Canada. You, who have never experienced the discomforts of travelling through a newly-settled country, cannot easily conceive the pleasure I felt in occasionally reaching a respectable tavern. For three days, I had been disgusted with the dirtiness, noise, and grossness of the Canadian boatmen, and, during as many nights, had been prevented from sleeping by the fumes of rum and tobacco, the bites of musquetoes, and the hardness of the planks which formed my bed. The hotel at Kingston happened to afford tolerable accommodations, and I enjoyed them so much, that I believe I was less industrious in ob-

serving the city and its environs than I ought to have been.

Kingston contains about five thousand inhabitants, including military. The plan of the town is elegant and extensive, but not yet nearly realized. Most of the houses are built of limestone; inexhaustible quarries of which lie in the immediate vicinity of the town, and are of the greatest importance to it, as Kingston, being the key to Upper Canada, will always require strong fortifications. There is nothing the least interesting, or remarkable, in either the streets or buildings of this place. The better class of people, most of whom are in the mercantile line, live in good style, but are not very hospitable; and there appears to be little polish among them, and not much social communication.

The natural position and local advantages of Kingston are such, that, by means of proper fortifications, it might be made almost impregnable. It lies behind a point of land, on the extremity of which there is a strong fort that commands the town and the entrance into the harbour so completely, that although an enemy had possession of the former, he could not occupy it with safety, nor receive any supplies by means of the latter.

The bay affords so fine a harbour, that a vessel of one hundred and twenty guns can lie close

to the quay. The St Lawrence, which carries one hundred guns, was in this position when I visited Kingston, and I enjoyed an opportunity of seeing every part of her. She is built in the plainest style, but is amazingly strong and beautifully modelled. Near her lay the Prince Regent, a sixty-gun frigate, the elegant form and just proportions of which have excited the admiration of the best judges of naval architecture. There were several other frigates in the harbour, the names and dimensions of which I have now forgot.

I likewise visited the naval depot, which contains the guns, yards, and rigging of the different vessels, all separate, and arranged so judiciously, that any of them might be equipped in the course of a few hours. There is also a large building appropriated for the reception of spare gun-carriages, masts, cables, tops, &c. But what gratified me more than all this, was the appearance of the armoury, which, in boldness of effect and neatness of arrangement, equals any thing of the kind I have ever seen, and reflects much credit upon the superintendant. The small arms of the St Lawrence and frigates are placed (distinct from each other) around the walls of a large apartment in the most ingenious and fanciful manner, and so as to occupy the least possible space. The effect is very imposing, every

article being in a high state of brightness, and fit for immediate service.

Kingston was a place of great importance during the last war, as it alone afforded us the means of successfully carrying on our naval operations on Lake Ontario. You are aware that no affair of any importance ever took place between the American fleet and ours; the respective forces were for a long time so exactly balanced, that neither of the parties deemed it prudent to venture upon a general engagement; and the warfare consisted almost entirely of a system of reconnoitering, in the course of which we were alternately the pursuers and the pursued. However, at last, when the St Lawrence was finished, we gained a decided superiority, for she made us master of Lake Ontario without firing a single gun, the enemy's fleet never having ventured far out after she left Kingston harbour.

The Americans had built their ships of war with much expedition, and they were greatly inferior to ours in point of strength and durability; but, on the other hand, their sloops and schooners were admirably constructed, and sailed infinitely quicker and more close to the wind. The Americans certainly excel all nations in modelling small vessels; and even their common packet-boats are formed with an elegance and

beauty, which one will look for in vain among British craft of a similar description.

The soil around Kingston is indifferent, being of a cold clayey nature, and such as would require much lime or plaster of Paris to render it productive. It is not in a high state of cultivation; and indeed all improvements are confined to the limits of the town, in which there were eighteen or twenty houses building when I was there.

I frequently amused myself with strolling to the wharfs, and watching the arrival of the batteaux, several brigades of which came in every day, full of emigrants, and loaded with their baggage. The majority of these people seemed to have no idea that the necessaries of life could be obtained in Upper Canada, for they brought from their native country, tables, chairs, chests of drawers, and great quantities of other lumber, the carriage of which must have cost infinitely more than the articles did themselves.

How quickly do mankind discover those things that gratify their vanity! Many of the emigrants I saw had been on shore a few hours only; during their passage between Montreal and Kingston, yet they had already acquired those absurd notions of independence and equality, which are so deeply engrafted in the minds of the lowest

individuals of the American nation. On accosting two Scotsmen, whom I had seen at Montreal, instead of pulling off their hats, as they had invariably done before on similar occasions, they merely nodded to me with easy familiarity. I addressed them by their Christian names, and inquired if they had any prospect of obtaining employment. "This gentleman," said one, pointing to his companion, who was a bricklayer, "has been offered four shillings a-day at Prescott, but his good lady does not like the place."

In the evening I embarked on board the steamboat Frontenac, which was to sail for York at midnight. I went to bed at an early hour, and, on awaking next morning, found myself in the middle of Lake Ontario, and out of sight of land. I could not but invoke a thousand blessings on the inventors and improvers of the steamboat, for the delightful mode of conveyance with which their labours had been the means of furnishing mankind. Next morning, I got up refreshed; and it required some recollection to perceive that I was not in the Kingston hotel. I immediately repaired to the deck, where I found the greater number of the cabin passengers enjoying the morning breeze, and soliciting an appetite for breakfast.

The Frontenac is the largest steam-boat in Canada; her deck is one hundred and seventy-

one feet long, and thirty-two feet wide. She is seven hundred and forty tons burden, and draws only eight feet water when loaded. Two paddle-wheels, each about forty feet in circumference, impel her through the water. Her length is so great, that she answers very slowly to the helm; but I understand she was built of the dimensions I have stated, that she might cover three seas, and thus be prevented from pitching violently in boisterous weather.

Breakfast being announced by the ringing of a bell, we descended, to the number of four or five and twenty, to a well-furnished table. Of all modes of conveyance, a steam-boat is the most favourable to the excitement of sociality among travellers, for there are none of those petty miseries or trivial annoyances to be endured, that so often occur on board a ship or in a stage-coach. At sea, a whole party is sometimes incommoded by the complaints and appearance of some individual who suffers under sickness; and in a carriage, people soon become fatigued, and are prevented from talking by the noise of the wheels. In a steam-boat, however, there is no impediment to lively conversation, or the reciprocal interchange of all those sweet courtesies of life that gild the path of the traveller, as pleasingly as varieties of scenery in the country through which he passes. Agreeable

company and entertaining incidents smooth the roughest road, and our feelings, our judgment, and even our vision, are unconsciously affected by the degree of personal comfort we enjoy, and the mode of conveyance to which we are subjected. —Dr Goldsmith somewhere observes, that the man who makes the grand tour of Europe on foot, will make very different remarks, and form very different conclusions, from him who rolls along in a post-chaise. Nothing can be more true, and, I believe, upon this principle we may ascribe the diversities and contradictions which often characterize the accounts that different persons give of the same country, to the mode in which they have travelled, and the difficulties they have encountered in the course of their journeys. A series of hardships will distrub the placidity of the most philosophic person, and make him believe that the things around him are permanently stamped with the temporary colouring which they have derived from accidental circumstances. But he who is whirled along by the magic power of steam, meets with nothing to modify his impressions; and I would say to all testy and irritable travellers, that the best way of keeping out of the *hot water* into which every cross accident plunges them, is to keep under the influence of the *steam*.

Lake Ontario is two hundred and thirty miles

long, and sixty broad at its widest part. Its waters are quite transparent and colourless, but vapid and unpleasant to the taste. Soundings are rarely to be met with, except near the shore; and, as very few islands or points of land present themselves upon its expanse, it is adapted for every kind of navigation, and will, of course, admit vessels of the largest size. The current which moves forward this immense body of water is distinctly perceptible, being, on an average, at the rate of half a mile an hour, but varying with the direction and strength of the wind.

The most remarkable phenomenon which this and the other lakes exhibit, is that increase and rise of their waters which is said to take place at regular periods. It occurs, in a moderate degree, every seven years, and to a very great extent once in thirty or forty. In the year 1816, the waters of Lake Ontario were seven feet and a half perpendicular above their average height, and Lake Erie was affected in a similar way. I have visited the shores of Lake Ontario several times, accompanied by a person who resides upon them, whose intelligence and indisputable veracity made me put full confidence in the information he gave, and from whom I received proofs of the accuracy of what I have now stated. I likewise saw the remains of a large storehouse

which had been built a few years before, in a situation that seemed quite inaccessible to the lake, although the waters have surrounded and nearly demolished it.

This singular phenomenon affords a problem very difficult to solve. The quantity of water that must be required to increase the depth of Lake Ontario, and all the other lakes, seven and a half feet perpendicular, is so vast, that it is impossible to conceive where its source can lie.—The height of the waters of the lakes, indeed, varies a few inches almost daily; but this is occasioned by changes in the direction of the wind. When it is east, or north-east, the waters are driven back, or at least impeded in their course, and consequently an accumulation takes place, which makes the lakes rise; but if it blows from the south, or south-west, the direction in which they flow, their waters are hurried towards the St Lawrence, and, of course, decrease in height in proportion to the strength of the wind.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, during his voyage to the north-west, observed that the waters of the rivers and lakes which he navigated underwent considerable variation in their height, the increase and decrease sometimes amounting to two or three feet; which proves that this phenomenon is not confined to the lower lakes. If

this augmentation of the waters took place only at irregular periods, we might suppose that it proceeded from the occasional melting of part of those immense quantities of ice and snow which are accumulated in the northern regions; but even this would scarcely be adequate to produce the effect which cannot at present be rationally accounted for.

During locomotion, the mind is little disposed to give continuity of attention to any thing, and had the Frontenac been furnished with a library, I believe few of my fellow-passengers would have troubled it; therefore, when they had got tired with playing at backgammon, and surveying the machinery, the sum of their amusement seemed to be exhausted; and the successive occurrence of dinner, tea, and supper, had but little effect in preventing symptoms of *ennui* from appearing among them.

The night proved dark and unpleasant; a host of threatening clouds obscured the hitherto spotless sky, while a dreary blast careered along the lake, and made its waters noisy and turbulent. Notwithstanding the darkness, I continued to walk the deck till near midnight, my steps being guided by the irregular light shed by the showers of glowing sparks that flashed in rapid succession from the flue, and were

whirled aloft in every direction. At last it began to rain, and I retired to my birth; however, after some time, I was induced to go on deck again by the noise which awakened me. The wind having became boisterous, the lake was now excessively rough, and the steam-boat rolled in a violent manner, particularly when she lay in the trough of the sea. The confusion that had roused me was occasioned by the appearance of a light off the bow of the vessel, which was immediately believed to proceed from York light-house, and as it was too dark to attempt gaining the harbour, there seemed no alternative but to lay to till morning. This was accordingly done: however, when the day dawned, and the mists cleared away, it was found that an utter mistake had been made in the reckoning, for we were upwards of twenty miles below York. The light which occasioned this false alarm belonged to a small schooner, as I was afterwards informed by a gentleman who had been on board of her at the time.

In the morning the boisterous weather had subsided, and a gentle breeze soon dispelled all remains of the storm. However, the fears of some of my fellow-passengers were not so easily dissipated, and many of them appeared at the breakfast table, wan, dejected, and sea-sick.

The steam-boat Frontenac, when the wind is favourable, sails nine knots an hour with ease. We fortunately had a strong breeze directly astern, which soon brought us in sight of York, the seat of government, and the capital of Upper Canada.

LETTER V.

Town of York—Disadvantages of its situation—Proposal to remove the seat of government—Re-embark on board the Steam-boat—Lake Ontario at night—Spray of Niagara Falls—Village of Niagara—Its amusements—Affecting incident—Reflections on the condition of emigrants—Road to Queenston—Niagara river—Peach orchards—Canadian peasantry.

THE town of [redacted] is situated on the shore of Lake Ontario, and has a large bay in front of it, which affords good anchorage for small vessels. The land all around the harbour and behind the town is low, swampy, and apparently of inferior quality; and it could not be easily drained, as it lies almost on a level with the surface of the lake. The town, in which there are some good houses, contains about 3000 inhabitants. There is but little land cleared in its immediate vicinity, and this circumstance increases the natural unpleasantness of its situation. The trade of [redacted] is very trifling; and it owes its present population and magnitude entirely to its being the seat of government, for it is destitute of every natural advantage except that of a good harbour.

[redacted] is nearly defenceless at present, and the

character of the surrounding country precludes the possibility of its ever being made a place of strength. There is no eminence or commanding point of land suitable for the erection of a battery; and the fort, which was lately built, is so incapable, from its low situation, of effectually annoying an enemy, that a single frigate might lay the town in ruins without any difficulty.—From this circumstance, it is evident that York is not at all calculated for the seat of government, which, in colonies particularly, should be either situated in the interior, or in an exposed situation, nearly impregnable.

I believe it was once proposed by parliament that the seat of government should be removed to Kingston, which town, although not altogether unexceptionable, has, from its position and resources, many more claims to this distinction than York; but it seems that the government officers, residing in the latter place, estimated the depreciation which their property would suffer, and the loss which they themselves would necessarily incur, if this arrangement took place, at such an immense amount, that the project was abandoned. It was likewise urged as an objection, that were the seat of government removed to Kingston, the members of parliament for the western parts of the province would suffer much inconvenience, in being obliged to tra-

vel a distance of four or five hundred miles every time the legislature met.

The country adjacent to Lake Simcoe has lately been talked of as affording an eligible site for the provincial capital. The fertility of that part of Upper Canada, and its inland and central situation, doubtless render it preferable to York; however, at present, there does not seem to be the least probability that the seat of government will be removed from the spot which it now occupies.

After strolling around York for an hour or two, I re-embarked on board the steam-boat, in company with the greater number of my former fellow-passengers. The paddle-wheels were soon put in motion, and we were impelled gaily on towards Niagara, which is thirty-six miles distant from York. It was now evening; the receding lights of the town twinkled dimly through the rising mists that shrouded the houses and garrison from our view, and a beautiful moon soon appeared, which clad the waters of Lake Ontario in a "mantle of light." The air was keen and frosty, but though I felt cold, I was unwilling to leave the deck. The beauty of the night did not detain me among the dews, (for I had seen many lovelier), but Lake Ontario was new to me, and you know I always love to treasure first impressions, the remembrance of which is as dear

and reviving to the soul in future life, as the warm but imperfect sketches made during the first efforts of genius are to the recollection of a painter. My attention was soon roused by an interesting object; for one of the passengers approaching, asked me if I observed a faint cloud towards the west. "That cloud," said he, "is the spray which arises from the Falls of Niagara." A thin white vapour was all I could discover, for we were yet more than thirty miles distant from the cataract itself. However, I could not soon withdraw my eyes from an object so affecting.

We reached Niagara village about ten at night, when, after nearly two hours' examination of the spray of the Falls, I went to sleep. On awaking next morning, I found every thing enlivened by the influence of a brilliant sun. The Niagara river, at whose mouth we lay, reflected in its deep and pure waters every rock and tree that adorned its banks, and every little cloud that sailed along the face of heaven. The village, surrounded by plains which were variegated with clumps of natural shrubbery, appeared neat, gay, and picturesque; and was crowned by a small fort at a little distance, the ramparts of which were crowded with soldiers. Two schooners had just left the harbour in full sail. On the deck of one of them were several cattle, and the lake

was so still, that every motion the animals made was pictured in its silvery expanse.

The population of Niagara amounts to seven or eight hundred souls, and it is one of the most thriving villages in Upper Canada. It contains a great many merchants' shops, and has a regular market, as the farmers who occupy the country around frequent it weekly, that they may sell their produce, or dispose of it to the merchants in exchange for goods. The mouth of the river forms an excellent harbour. Some time ago a considerable number of schooners and small craft plied between Kingston, York, and Niagara, which were employed in transporting goods, produce, and lumber; but the steam-boat now monopolizes almost all the carrying business, to the great detriment and annoyance of the owners of the vessels.

A detachment of military are always stationed at Niagara, and this circumstance tends to make the place more lively and flourishing than it would otherwise be. The village contains some pretty houses, with several decent taverns; and the military and civilians together form a small society, which, on particular occasions, is improved and augmented by the addition of those families who reside in the vicinity. During the winter season, public dancing assemblies are held once a fortnight in one of the hotels, and, when

the roads are in a favourable state, these are attended by people from all parts of the district. Races likewise occur twice a-year, which, though they do not afford much amusement, are of advantage to the place, being the means of assembling people together. Two weekly newspapers are published in Niagara. The press from which one of them issues has acquired some celebrity, from its having afforded Mr Gourlay the means of carrying on a political cannonade against the provincial administration, during nearly two years.

One evening, as I strolled along the beach of the Lake, in front of Niagara, a woman, whom I had observed at some distance, approached, and, after several low curtsies, requested me to follow her; and, as she seemed to be in deep affliction, I immediately complied, without asking an explanation. She conducted me to a kind of cave, under a high sand-bank, the mouth of which was barricadoed with a chest of drawers, several trunks, &c. A mattress occupied the floor of this wild abode, and two children played gaily with one another upon it, the one attempting to beat his merry companion with an old pillow, and raising shouts of laughter and delight every time he succeeded in giving a blow. The mother, who continued to shed tears, told me, that she and her family were Irish emigrants. They

had been induced, by a series of misfortunes, to set sail for Canada, with the intention of obtaining land, and had, after many difficulties, got thus far in their voyage; but, being now destitute of money, they were unable to procure a lodging, and knew not where to apply for work, assistance, or information. "A husband and these two boys," said the woman, "are all that now remain to me. My little girl died in the ship, and they threw her into the sea. Aye, sure, that was the worst of all," continued she, in an agony of grief. "Poor babe! she had neither prayers nor a wake!"

On my way back to the village, I was occupied with reflections upon the helpless condition of most of the emigrants who come to Canada, and the indifference which the supreme government have ever manifested about the welfare and prosperity of the colony. Those people, who came to the province with an intention of settling in it, are totally destitute of the means of obtaining authentic information respecting the place to which they should proceed, or where or in what manner they should apply for a grant of land. Inexperienced, ignorant of the country, and often disappointed with it at *first*, it cannot be expected that they should resolutely struggle with the difficulties that present themselves on every side. The slaves of vague reports, and

false and exaggerated descriptions, they know not where to direct their steps; and, after being alternately encouraged, depressed, and deceived, they perhaps prematurely determine to return to their native country, wretched as the asylum is which it at present affords to the poor and unfortunate of all classes. When I was in Quebec and Montreal, I had opportunities of knowing, that many of the hovels of these cities contained crowds of British emigrants, who were struggling with those complicated horrors of poverty and disease, whom the hope of being exempted from such evils had induced to abandon the clime of their birth. The greater number of these people, when they first landed, had funds enough to carry them to the Upper Province, and even settle them comfortably on their locations; but they knew not where the "promised land" lay, and were detained in Lower Canada, by anxious and unavailing efforts to obtain correct information upon the subject. All the misery occasioned by this circumstance, and various others of a similar nature, might be easily prevented, and thousands of active settlers annually added to the province, if the supreme government would bestow a moment's attention upon the matter, and place in Quebec, Montreal, and the other towns, an agent, to whom the emigrants could apply for advice and information. I am aware

that Emigrant Societies have already been established in the principal towns of Lower Canada, but such owe their existence entirely to the benevolent exertions of private individuals, and are, comparatively speaking, superficial and limited in their operation. Nothing but the interference of the supreme government can effectually rid poor emigrants of the difficulties they have at present to encounter when they arrive in Lower Canada. A regular, cheap, direct mode of conveyance should be established between Quebec and York for them alone; they would then be enabled to reach the Upper Province at a very trifling expense, and the concern would not cost government any thing, as people might be carried up the St Lawrence and lakes for one-third the sum they pay for their passage at present. When the emigrants had reached York, I should consider further assistance unnecessary. Were all persons to get there as cheaply and expeditiously as the plan recommended would enable them to do, there would be few of those instances of poverty and distress which are at present so common among new-comers. Almost all emigrants, after paying their passage to Quebec, have what they conceive to be enough, and what *really* is far more than enough, to pay their expenses to York; but the present mode of travelling up the country is so unreasonably expensive, and

the delays and uncertainties which attend their movements are so numerous, that they spend twice as much in the course of their journey as is necessary, and four times as much as would be required, were government to take the charge of transporting them into its own hands.

Some years ago, government gave liberal encouragement to those who were disposed to emigrate to Canada. Besides paying their passage across the Atlantic, it provided them with rations and farming utensils, during one year subsequent to their arrival in the country. But this plan apparently did not answer; the lowest and most worthless members of society immediately took advantage of the facilities which it afforded to emigration, and lived in idleness as long as they received rations; and at last sold their agricultural utensils and went to the United States. The conduct of these people made government abandon all idea of assisting emigrants farther, than by granting them a certain quantity of land. At first there was too much done for them—*now* there is too little. The mode of assisting the lower classes should always be regulated by the knowledge we possess of their character. They abuse, and undervalue, every thing they can obtain without exertion or individual merit, partly because their pride enjoys no triumph in obtaining it, and partly because

they suppose that nothing really valuable will ever be gratuitously bestowed upon them. For these reasons, it is inexpedient to allow emigrants a free passage to Canada, or to *give* them any thing but land when they arrive there. The great object is to *lessen* the expense of the voyage across the Atlantic, and of the journey through the interior of the country. The passage-money to Quebec might be made so low as £2, provisions included; and small as this sum is, it may be proved by calculation, that government would not lose any thing by transporting emigrants at such a rate, except the use of the vessels that were engaged in the undertaking. An individual might be conveyed from any port in Great Britain to York, in Upper Canada, for £3, 3s., if a proper system of management were pursued both at home and abroad. Every man, whose constitution and age fitted him for the labour of clearing land, could raise this sum without difficulty; and the more trouble he had in procuring it, the more disposed would he be [illegible]ue the cheapness of his voyage and jou[illegible]and to become industrious when he reac[illegible] his place of destination. Idle and worthless characters would in some measure be deterred from crossing the Atlantic; while the relief of the honest poor, and the prosperity of our North American settlements, would alike

be the result of adopting these simple means for facilitating emigration.

Hitherto I have not made much mention of the peasantry of Upper Canada, nor attempted to give you any idea of their manners, condition, or mode of life; and I have also deferred making various remarks, which were suggested by the details contained in my former letters. My object in omitting these things was, to be able to concentrate all the information I had to offer you upon such subjects, when I came to describe the most fertile, populous, and important part of Upper Canada.—The portion of the Province to which these characters more particularly belong, commences at the mouth of the Niagara river, and extends westward to the head of Lake Erie. This tract of country, from the superiority of the soil, the comparative mildness of the climate, the largeness of the population, and various other circumstances of a local nature, will always be the most valuable part of Upper Canada, and, consequently, is at present the most interesting. I shall therefore, [redacted]sional sketches, endeavour to make you a[redacted]ted with its inhabitants.

The village of Queenston lies seven miles above Niagara. The road winds along the bank of the river for a considerable part of the way, and, in point of dryness and smoothness, equals

any turnpike in England. Excellent and improved lands border both sides of it, except where it adjoins the river; and in these places the farms have a delightful open front, which commands a very agreeable prospect, and lies within call of every vessel that passes. The banks of the Niagara river, towards Queenston, are for the most part high and bold, but not rocky or covered with trees; and, from this last circumstance, they have a tameness which does not harmonize well with the grandeur of the stream that flows between them. This beautiful river,—broad, deep, smooth, and moderate in its course,—affords an excellent harbour for shipping of any burden from its mouth even to Queenston; and can be navigated to the latter place by experienced persons whether the wind is favourable or not, there being such a close succession of eddies along its banks, that, if a vessel is merely steered from one to the other, she may be brought up without difficulty or danger.

The soil and climate here seem to be admirably adapted to the production and growth of fruit. Nursery, as apple and peach orchards ornament the sides of the road, and are, every season, loaded with a profusion of delightful fruit, which, however, appears to be very little valued by the owners, for in many places they allow their pigs to range among the trees, and pick up all that

fall from ripeness, or are blown off by the wind. These animals, I am told, soon begin to be indifferent about delicacies of this kind, and often, at last, become so satiated, that they will eat those peaches only that have very recently dropt from the tree.

These orchards may almost be said to grow wild; at least they receive no attention after they are first planted,—being neither fenced, pruned, nor manured, at any time. Indeed, the peasantry evince the utmost indifference about every thing that is not absolutely necessary to support existence. They raise wheat, Indian corn, and potatoes enough, to place themselves beyond the reach of want; but rarely endeavour to increase their comforts, by making gardens, or adorning the sites of their rude abodes with those rural improvements that so often grace the cottages of the British peasantry. Among the humble dwellings in Upper Canada,

> No roses wreathing,
> Or woodbines breathing,
> Around the lattice their tendrils spread.

Nor does the bee, in the stillness of a glowing summer day, hum among the honeysuckle, and, weighing down its flowers, rob them of their luscious treasures, for the benefit of him who reared and watered the parent plant.

In my opinion, the love of rural economy and improvement, among the lower classes, is a tolerably sure indication that they have virtuous dispositions. Idleness, intemperance, and dishonesty, are habits which eradicate from the human mind all inclination for any thing that is less hideous and deformed than themselves; while sobriety, industry, and other domestic virtues, give birth to that desire for innocent luxury and useful recreation, which makes the peasant both amiable and respectable, without alienating his affections from the circumscribed sphere that his condition necessarily assigns them.

I had anticipated much pleasure from the idea of being an eye-witness of that neatness, taste, and inviting simplicity, which, I was told, characterised the peasantry of Upper Canada, and showed them to be, what they really are, the happiest people on earth; but I, indeed, felt disappointed, when, even in the oldest settlements, I saw every thing in a state of primitive rudeness and barbarism. However, this circumstance did not make me prematurely draw any conclusions respecting the real character of their inhabitants. I first entered the houses and got acquainted with their inmates, and you, my friend, must do so likewise, in company with me, before you form any prepossessions either favourable or unfavourable.

LETTER VI.

Village of Queenston—Situation—Ferry—Portage—Romantic environs—Heights—Breadth of the Niagara river—Death and character of General Brock—Last American war—Bravery of the Canadians—Effects of the war—Prodigality—Commercial embarrassments—Vanity of the farmers—Tuscorora Indians—Account of their village—Conversation and charaeters there—Indian hymn—View from Queenston heights—Whirlpool—Thunder storm—Meteorological phenomenon.

Now that I have reached that part of the province called the Niagara district, I shall lay aside the form of a journal, which I have hitherto adopted, and present you with sketches of the interesting objects I have met with in different parts of the country, without noticing the order in which they fell under my observation. My wanderings through the more westerly parts of Upper Canada have been so various, and have taken place at so many intervals, that it will be much better for me to generalize a little, and give you the results of my different journeyings, than to impose upon you the task of perusing a detailed account of them individually.

The village of Queenston is beautifully situated at the foot of a hill, and upon the side of the

Niagara river, the bank of which is high and precipitous. The imagination is agreeably struck with the first view of the place. On one side of the village is a mountain covered with shrubbery and verdure;—behind, a rich and cultivated plain extends backwards, which is bounded in every direction by luxuriant woods, while in front, the Niagara river glides in majestic stillness, and may be traced, with all its windings, till its waters are swallowed up in the vast expanse of Lake Ontario. The soil around Queenston consists chiefly of a red clay, the bright colour of which, upon the roads and declivities where it is exposed, forms a singular contrast, during summer, with the pure green of the trees and fields in the vicinity.

The narrowness of the river here, and its suitableness for a ferry, render this one of the principal channels of communication between Upper Canada and the United States; consequently there is a continual interchange of waggons, cattle, passengers, &c. which makes Queenston rather more lively than it would otherwise be. However, all its external attractiveness depends upon the fineness of its situation. The buildings are irregular and inelegant; and an air of depression and inactivity pervades the whole place, to a degree I never saw equalled in any village of the same extent.

Queenston must infallibly acquire magnitude and importance when the Province becomes populous and flourishing, for it is situated at the commencement of a portage, which never can be evaded by any improvement in the navigation, it being rendered necessary by the Falls of Niagara; therefore all vessels, containing goods and stores destined for the western parts of Upper Canada, must unload and leave their cargoes at Queenston, that they may be conveyed overland to Chippowa, where the Niagara river again becomes navigable. Even now, a good deal of this carrying business goes on during the summer months. The North-west Company forward a considerable quantity of stores to the Indian territories by this route, and the country merchants receive annual supplies of goods from Montreal, and send down pork, flour, staves, and potash, in return.

The environs of Queenston are beautifully picturesque and romantic, and nothing can be finer than the prospect up the Niagara river. Immediately above the village its channel narrows very much, and the banks rise to the height of three hundred feet perpendicular, while at the same time they become wild and rocky, and are thickly covered with trees of various kinds. In some places they partly over-arch the river, and throw an appalling gloom upon its waters, now dashed

into turbulence and impetuosity by the ruggedness of their sloping bed. It was night when I first viewed this scene, and as the moon gradually rose, she threw a broken light successively upon different portions of the stream, and sometimes brought to view the foamy bosom of a Rapid, at other times unveiled the struggling and heaving waters of a whirlpool, while the mingled roar, on all sides, excited a shuddering curiosity about those parts of the river that rolled along in darkness.

Over the precipice, on the summit of which I stood while I contemplated this scene, many of the American soldiers had rushed at the close of the battle of Queenston heights. They were so warmly pressed by our troops and the Indians, and had so little prospect of obtaining quarter from the latter, that a great number wildly flung themselves over the steep, and tried to save their lives by catching hold of the trees that grew upon it; but many were frightfully dashed to pieces by the rocks, and others who reached the river perished in their attempts to swim across it. Several, who had dropped among the cliffs without receiving any injury, were afterwards transfixed and killed by falling upon their own bayonets, while in the act of leaping from one spot to another. I almost imagined I saw these unfortunate men writhing in all the agonies of a

protracted death, and gazing with envy at their companions, who were convulsively catching for breath among the sullen waters below. Were the Canadians inclined to be superstitious, they could not select a more suitable place than this for the haunt and appearance of unearthly beings. The wildness of the scenery, the gloom of the cliffs, and the melancholy incident I have just related, would subject Queenston heights to the *suspicion* of any people more under the influence of imagination than the Canadians are, and make them conjure up half a dozen bleeding sentinels at the top of the precipice every night after sunset.

At the ferry, the Niagara river is twelve hundred and fifty feet in breadth, and from two to three hundred in depth. The current is very rapid, and the wreathing and perturbed appearance of the water, shews that its course is much impeded by the narrowness of the channel, which must be entirely composed of rocks; for, otherwise, the continual and rapid attrition of such a large river as that which flows through it, would undermine and wear away the banks, and thus gradually enlarge and widen its course. I could not survey this noble stream without awe, when I contrasted it in the state in which it flowed before me, with the appearance it has when mingling with the ocean. I recollected having beat about the mouth of the St Lawrence during two days,

and having been alarmed by the prospect of shipwreck, while in the vessel that conveyed me to Lower Canada; but now the waters which formed the dangerous gulf all passed silently before me, within the narrow limits occupied by the Niagara river. The St Lawrence derives but a small proportion of its torrents from tributary streams, the Ottawa being the only river of great magnitude that joins it. The rivers Chaudiere, Saguenai, Pepechaissinagau, Black River, &c. are trifling indeed, when compared with that into which they discharge themselves.

The Niagara river is subject to those periodical alterations in height, which, as I have already mentioned, occur in the lakes. This can be satisfactorily proved by the wharfs at Queenston, some of which are five feet higher above the surface of the river than they were in the year 1817, and also by the water-marks left on the perpendicular sand-banks near the ferry.

General Brock was killed at the battle of Queenston heights, and the place where he fell was pointed out to me. The Canadians hold the memory of this brave and excellent man in great veneration, but have not yet attempted to testify their respect for his virtues in any way, except by shewing to strangers the spot on which he received his mortal wound. He was more popular, and more beloved by the inhabitants of Up-

per Canada, than any man they ever had among them, and with reason; for he possessed, in an eminent degree, those virtues which add lustre to bravery, and those talents that shine alike in the cabinet and in the field. His manners and dispositions were so conciliating as to gain the affection of all whom he commanded, while his innate nobleness and dignity of mind secured him a respect almost amounting to veneration. He is now styled the Hero of Upper Canada, and, had he lived, there is no doubt but the war would have terminated very differently from what it did. The Canadian farmers are not overburthened with sensibility, yet I have seen several of them shed tears, when an eulogium was pronounced upon the immortal and generous-minded deliverer of their country.

General Brock was killed close to the road that leads through Queenston village, and an aged thorn bush now marks the place where he fell, when the fatal ball entered his vitals. This spot may be called classic ground, for a view of it must awaken in the minds of all those who duly appreciate the greatness of his character, and are acquainted with the nature of his resources and exertions, feelings as warm and enthusiastic as the contemplation of monuments consecrated by antiquity can ever do. Oft, at night, have I sat under the thorn tree, when every light in the village was

extinguished, and nature participated in the repose that which sealed the eyes of mortals. Then the fire-flies, twinkling among the recesses of the distant forests, would be the only objects that exhibited an appearance of life to the eye; while the Niagara river rolled its sublime tide silently along, and drank, in quiescent luxuriance, the floods of light that were poured upon its bosom by a glorious moon. On one side, the setting stars were struggling with the mists that rose from Lake Ontario; and on the other, clouds of spray, evolved from the mighty cataract, ascended majestically to heaven,—sometimes shaping themselves into vast pyramids that resembled snow-capt mountains, and sometimes extending their volumes into phantom-like forms, which imagination might figure to be the presiding genii of the water-fall.

The last American war forms an important era in the history of Upper Canada, and as such, it is continually referred to by the people, who, when alluding in a general way to the time at which any circumstance occurred, say that it happened before or after the war. The invasion of the Province excited no attention in Europe, or even in Britain, for at the time it took place we were engaged, in conjunction with the great continental powers, in a contest so gigantic and

momentous, that all minor concerns of the same nature were forgotten amidst the anxiety and alarm which the varying anticipations of its result produced on the public mind. However, the hostilities which took place in Upper Canada, although conducted on a small scale, were very interesting in their character, and would furnish excellent materials for a work such as is usually called a Campaign. A warfare carried on in a wild and wooded country, and with the assistance of Indian allies, is productive of incidents and events, which never occur in an open field of battle, nor during the rencounter of regular troops.

The bravery of the Canadian militia, which was brilliantly conspicuous on many occasions, has neither been sufficiently known, nor duly appreciated, on the other side of the Atlantic. The regular troops on foreign service have generally a good opportunity of securing to themselves all the glory that results from a successful campaign, although a part only may belong to them; as they are always inclined to undervalue the services of the militia, and often treat them with contempt and ridicule, merely because they have not been initiated into the minutiæ of military discipline and parade. I am aware, that the gallantry of the native battalions of Upper Canada

has been kept in the back-ground, by this want of generosity which prevails among the regular troops.

The last war was productive of most injurious consequences to the colony, and these have not been counterbalanced by a single advantage, except that the militia now feel a confidence in the efficiency of their arms, which may induce them to take the field with boldness and alacrity, should hostilities again commence. Before the declaration of war took place, Upper Canada was in a state of progressive though slow improvement, and her inhabitants prudently attempted such exertions only as were proportioned to their means. Agriculture was pursued by all classes, and few thought of enriching themselves by any other occupation. But militia duty obliged them to abandon their farms, which were of course neglected,—the lands became waste, the cattle were carried away, and the buildings perhaps burnt by the enemy. However, the military establishments had brought such an influx of money into the country, that every one forgot his distresses, and thought himself on the high road to wealth, when he found he could sell any thing he possessed for double its real value, and have his pockets stuffed with army bills, as a recompense for some trifling service done to go-

vernment. At this time, the abundance of circulating medium, and the liberality with which it was expended, induced many people to bring large quantities of goods from Montreal, and retail stores soon became numerous in every part of the country. As the people continued to buy a great deal, and to pay for a great deal, the merchants willingly allowed them unlimited credit, erroneously supposing that their customers would always be able to discharge their debts, and that the temporary wealth of the Province would continue. But when peace was restored, when the troops were withdrawn, and all military operations suspended, the people soon perceived that a sad reverse awaited them. They found that the circulation of money gradually decreased, that they could no longer revel upon the bounty of a profuse government, and that they began to grow poorer every day; while the prospect of returning to their ravaged and uncultivated farms afforded but little consolation, as the spirit of industry had been extinguished by the lavish manner in which most of them had lived during the war. As a large portion of the live stock which the country contained had been carried away by the enemy, or consumed by our own troops, the farmers were obliged to purchase cattle from the Americans,

and thus the country was still farther drained of much of the circulating specie, and in a way too that produced no commercial advantages.

In course of time, the Montreal wholesale merchants began to urge their correspondents in the Upper Province for remittances, which many of the latter could not make; for, on applying to those whom they had formerly trusted to a large amount, they found that, with a few exceptions, they were alike unable and unwilling to discharge their debts. The country thus fell into a state of embarrassment, which continues to increase: most of the merchants have very large outstanding debts, which, if collected by means of suits, would ruin two-thirds of the farmers in the Province; and should the Montreal wholesale dealers have recourse to similar measures, many of their correspondents would become insolvent likewise. Both parties, therefore, judiciously temporize, being satisfied that it is, at present, the most advantageous policy they can pursue.

The war has thus been the main cause of the present embarrassed and unpromising state of Upper Canada, and produced this effect in three different ways: first it was the means of withdrawing the minds of its inhabitants from their usual pursuits and occupations; next it extinguished that steadiness and spirit of industry

which had formerly characterized them; and, lastly, it created a temporary wealth in the Province, which induced the people to be lavish in every respect, and contract debts that were altogether disproportionate to their means of payment. Time has in some degree ameliorated the two first bad effects; but the merchants have been, and will be, the means of perpetuating the last. The number of merchants that Upper Canada contains, and the mode in which they carry on business, are circumstances equally destructive to the interests of the colony. Extensive credit is almost universally given to the farmers, one-tenth of whom have neither inclination nor prudence enough to adapt their expenditure to their means; and, as they generally pay and contract debts in an inverse ratio, their difficulties increase every year, and often at last terminate in the sale of their property, which sometimes takes place with the consent of the owner, but oftener in consequence of a suit. If the merchants desisted entirely from selling on credit, it would be equally advantageous for themselves and their customers. The latter might indeed be sometimes put to a little inconvenience, if they wanted to purchase any thing, and had not produce or money to pay for it at the time; but this would teach them a habit of economy, which they never can acquire while the present facility

of supplying their wants exists, or as long as their absurd and monstrous vanity remains unchecked, and urges them to indulge in luxuries and finery to which their condition in life does not entitle them. Had the farmers of Upper Canada been prevented from getting into debt, and had they remained satisfied with *homespun*, they would now enjoy, in its fullest extent, that independence which they profess to value so highly, but the substantial part of which they have wholly lost, as there is hardly an individual among them who is not liable to have an execution served against him when it suits the interest of those to whom he is indebted.

The war has had a most pernicious effect upon the morals of the people, which, I believe, were never very unexceptionable. The presence of a hostile army always enables those who are inclined, to commit excesses of every description with impunity; and example is more than usually contagious under such circumstances. Most of the American private soldiers were entirely destitute of moral principle, or any sense of decency, and often exhibited a wanton and unblushing profligacy, which in Europe would have received chastisement from the law. A good deal of this was communicated to the peasantry of Upper Canada, and the influence of the infection is not yet entirely destroyed.

Lest this dissertation upon the effects of the war should become tiresome, I shall abandon the subject, and take you to visit the Tuscorora Indians, who have a village on the American frontier, a few miles from Lewiston. The village consists of seventy or eighty houses, which are built of logs, and extend along a road three miles in length. On reaching the first habitation, I entered it without any ceremony, and found two Indians sitting cross-legged on a bed, smoking tomahawk pipes; they had the most drowsy contented air possible, and hardly took the trouble to turn their eyes upon me. Near them was an old squaw repairing mocassins, and a young man eating butter-milk and potatoes. Unfortunately, none of the party understood English, and I was obliged, after having remained some time in the middle of the floor nearly unnoticed, to proceed to another house. I visited several habitations, and generally found their inmates engaged much in the same manner as I have described; the beds, rooms, and kitchen utensils, were all odiously dirty, and none of the families seemed to have acquired the domestic habits of white people. At last, in one of the huts, I found a woman who spoke English well, and I immediately entered into conversation with her. She informed me that the village contained about two hundred souls, but that

a few months before the population had amounted to more than three hundred; however, a large number of the inhabitants had removed to the Grand River in consequence of religious differences, so that all who remained were professing Christians. "What prevented the others from receiving the faith?" said I; "Oh!" returned she, "the same devil, I suppose, that makes the white people live so bad." "Were those Indians that left the village very wicked?"—"Not so very, but they thought the Great Spirit had made them only to dance, and sing, and hunt, and get drunk, and they never had a Bible in their hands from one month to another; and when we advised them, they were angry, and said they liked their own God best."—"I suppose you have none but good people among you now?"—"Some of them only pretend to be good; but if they're not true, it will be the worse for them afterwards."

Mr Crane, a missionary, preaches in the Tuscorora village; but unfortunately he does not understand the Indian language, and is consequently obliged to use an interpreter. He has taught many of the inhabitants to read and write, as also to understand the gospel of St John, which is translated into Mohawk, and I am told they are very regular in their attendance at church.

At the last house I visited, I found the inha-

bitants far advanced in literary attainments. An old man, after inquiring about the state of public affairs in Canada, proceeded to give me a summary of the politics of Europe; and though he made some very amusing blunders, he showed that he had read a great many newspapers. One of his sons, with an air of vanity, produced a paper book, in which he had written the various hymns that the missionaries had translated into Indian. I gratified him much by copying part of one, which I annex, and hope you will find it more intelligible than I do!—

FLORIDA.

1.

Nyoh son gwea lea rouh
Tak wa ya ta te rist
Ne wa-on-ny, ne-fah-hah-ha,
Kyea-te-ry, ogh-when-tsya.

2.

Ne-on-gwe-hon-gon-ah
Niyoh, ra-goh-son-te
Rots-se-noe-ny, ra-on gwea sa
Oni-yon-ton-ha-rouh.

He next directed my attention to some of his drawings, which were ostentatiously pasted upon the walls of the house. One large piece was a representation of the battle of Waterloo, and, in consonance with the Indian taste, it exhibited a

great deal of bloodshed and slaughter. Several other of the young artist's productions were pointed out to my notice, one of which I purchased, that I might give him more substantial proofs of my admiration than mere praise could bestow.

The inhabitants of the Tuscorora village possess a considerable number of cows and hogs, with a few horses. Some of them have likewise small gardens, but I could not ascertain whence they derived their subsistence, as there is no hunting ground near Lewiston.

The Indians are far from being stupid, although, to a superficial observer, they have very much that appearance. They are very reserved, scarcely ever speaking to the white people, except when spoken to; and it is difficult to excite in them any kind of emotion, for they conceive it a piece of weakness to be affected by astonishment, joy, or anxiety. They slumber away a great part of their lives, sitting with legs crossed, smoking their pipes, and, I suppose, building castles in the air.

The prospect from the top of Queenston mountain is the finest and most extensive that Upper Canada affords, and, in an eminent degree, combines the beautiful and the magnificent. The wild and majestic precipices which engulf one part of the Niagara river, the windings and mirrored expanse of that noble body of water, the dim and

undiscoverable extent of Lake Ontario, together with the verdant orchards, thick forests, and improved fields, glowing beneath a pure sky, collectively form a scene of admirable effect and composition. Even York, which is thirty-six miles distant, and lies very low, can be seen from the summit of this hill during clear weather.

The road towards Niagara Falls leaves the bank of the river a little way above Queenston, and winds through a country more beautiful, cultivated, and inviting, than any other part of the Province. The farms here having been long occupied, are well cleared; and the road being excellent, and enlivened with a close succession of houses, the whole scene presents an aspect somewhat civilized and comfortable. This portion of Upper Canada, from its comparatively high state of cultivation, its nearness to the frontier, and its other local advantages, forms a more agreeable place of residence than is to be met with any where around.

About four miles above Queenston, there is a singular and interesting part of the Niagara river, called the Whirlpool. The banks here are extremely high and perpendicular; and, in addition to the natural channel, the current of the river has formed a semicircular excavation in them resembling a small bay. The mouth of it is more than a thousand feet wide, and its length

about two thousand. The current, which is extremely rapid, whenever it reaches the upper point of this bay, forsakes the direct channel, and sweeps wildly round the sides of it; when, having made this extraordinary circuit, it regains its proper course, and rushes with perturbed velocity between two perpendicular precipices, which are not more than four hundred feet asunder. The surface of the whirlpool is in a state of continual agitation. The water boils, mantles up, and wreathes, in a manner that proves its fearful depth and the confinement it suffers; as trees, that come within the sphere of the current, are swept along with a quivering zig-zag motion which it is difficult to describe. This singular body of water must be several hundred feet deep, and has not hitherto been frozen over, although in spring the broken ice that descends from Lake Erie collects in such quantities upon its surface, and becomes so closely wedged together, that it resists the current, and remains till warm weather breaks it up. The whirlpool is one of the greatest natural curiosities in the Upper Province, and is the more interesting to the mind, as its formation cannot be rationally accounted for.

While examining this singular spot, a heavy shower of rain came on, which obliged me to take shelter under a projecting cliff. Terrific thunder and vivid lightning soon began to accompany

the torrent which poured from the clouds, and I felt much alarmed, never having before witnessed a storm so violent and appalling. A strong wind tossed about the trees that grew near the banks of the river, sometimes bending them to such a degree, that their boughs lashed the water, and sometimes bringing the branches so suddenly into collision, that they were thereby shattered against each other. A host of black clouds at first covered the sky; but in a few minutes a great portion of it was unveiled in that state of transparent and dewy brightness which often succeeds a storm, and *two* rainbows,—resplendent heralds of peace among the elements,—soon appeared. But the other parts of the heavens continued dark and lowering as ever, while flashes of forked lightning darted over them in rapid succession, till a sudden change of the wind altered the disposition of the clouds with astonishing celerity, and conveyed the tempest to that part of the firmament where the calm had formerly been. This was repeated twice or thrice in the course of half an hour, so that the contrasts which the sky exhibited during this time were brilliant, unexpected, and interesting, beyond all description.

LETTER VII.

Niagara Falls—Different views of them—View from the Table Rock—Rainbows—A bold experiment—Appearance of the sheet of water—Noise—Difficult road to the bottom of the cataract—A perilous attempt there—View from the river under the cataract—American Fall—Dimensions of the Falls—People carried over them—Anecdote of an Indian—Wild ducks—Visit to Manchester—Mr Porter's bridge above the Falls—Goat Island—Speculations—Rapids of the Niagara river.

Now that I propose to attempt a description of the Falls of Niagara, I feel myself threatened with a return of those throbs of trembling expectation, which agitated me on my first visit to these stupendous cataracts, and to which every person of the least sensibility is liable, when he is on the eve of seeing any thing that has strongly excited his curiosity, or powerfully affected his imagination. I fear I will not be able to convey a correct idea of the scene I mean to describe. Yet, anxious as I am that you should have just conceptions of it, I would not, willingly, have accepted your company, when I first visited Niagara Falls;—as any object that did not enter into the real composition of the mighty scene, would have proved a source of painful interrup-

tion to me while engaged in contemplating its magnificent features.

The form of Niagara Falls is that of an irregular semicircle, about three quarters of a mile in extent. This is divided into two distinct cascades, by the intervention of Goat Island, the extremity of which is perpendicular, and in a line with the precipice over which the water is projected. The cataract on the Canada side of the river is called the Horse-shoe, or Great Fall, from its peculiar form,—and that next the United States the American Fall.

Three extensive views of the Falls may be obtained from three different places. In general, the first opportunity travellers have of seeing the cataract is from the high-road, which, at one point, lies near the bank of the river. This place, however, being considerably above the level of the Falls, and a good way beyond them, affords a view that is comparatively imperfect and unimposing.

The Table Rock, from which the Falls of Niagara may be contemplated in all their grandeur, lies on an exact level with the edge of the cataract, on the Canada side, and, indeed, forms a part of the precipice over which the water gushes. It derives its name from the circumstance of its projecting beyond the cliffs that support it like the leaf of a table. To gain this position, it is necessary to descend a steep

bank, and to follow a path that winds among shrubbery and trees, which entirely conceal from the eye the scene that awaits him who traverses it. When near the termination of this road, a few steps carried me beyond all these obstructions, and a magnificent amphitheatre of cataracts burst upon my view with appalling suddenness and majesty. However, in a moment the scene was concealed from my eyes by a dense cloud of spray, which involved me so completely, that I did not dare to extricate myself. A mingled rushing and thundering filled my ears. I could see nothing except when the wind made a chasm in the spray, and then tremendous cataracts seemed to encompass me on every side, while below, a raging and foamy gulf of undiscoverable extent lashed the rocks with its hissing waves, and swallowed, under a horrible obscurity, the smoking floods that were precipitated into its bosom.

At first, the sky was obscured by clouds, but after a few minutes the sun burst forth, and the breeze subsiding at the same time, permitted the spray to ascend perpendicularly. A host of pyramidal clouds rose majestically, one after another, from the abyss at the bottom of the Fall; and each, when it had ascended a little above the edge of the cataract, displayed a beautiful rainbow, which in a few moments was gradually

transferred into the bosom of the cloud that immediately succeeded. The spray of the Great Fall had extended itself through a wide space directly over me, and, receiving the full influence of the sun, exhibited a luminous and magnificent rainbow, which continued to over-arch and irradiate the spot on which I stood, while I enthusiastically contemplated the indescribable scene.

Any person, who has nerve enough (as I had), may plunge his hand into the water of the Great Fall after it is projected over the precipice, merely by lying down flat, with his face beyond the edge of the Table Rock, and stretching out his arm to its utmost extent. The experiment is truly a horrible one, and such as I would not wish to repeat; for, even to this day, I feel a shuddering and recoiling sensation when I recollect having been in the posture above described.

The body of water which composes the middle part of the Great Fall is so immense, that it descends nearly two-thirds of the space without being ruffled or broken, and the solemn calmness with which it rolls over the edge of the precipice is finely contrasted with the perturbed appearance it assumes after having reached the gulf below. But the water towards each side of the Fall is shattered the moment it drops over the rock, and loses as it descends, in a great measure, the character of a fluid, being divided into pyra-

midal-shaped fragments, the bases of which are turned upwards. The surface of the gulf below the cataract presents a very singular aspect; seeming, as it were, filled with an immense quantity of hoar frost, which is agitated by small and rapid undulations. The particles of water are dazzlingly white, and do not apparently unite together, as might be supposed, but seem to continue for a time in a state of distinct comminution, and to repel each other with a thrilling and shivering motion which cannot easily be described.

The noise made by the Horse-shoe Fall, though very great, is infinitely less than might be expected, and varies in loudness according to the state of the atmosphere. When the weather is clear and frosty, it may be distinctly heard at the distance of ten or twelve miles; nay much further when there is a steady breeze: but I have frequently stood upon the declivity of the high bank that overlooks the Table Rock, and distinguished a low thundering only, which at times was altogether drowned amidst the roaring of the Rapids above the cataract. In my opinion, the concave shape of the Great Fall explains this circumstance. The noise vibrates from one side of the rocky recess to the other, and a little only escapes from its confinement, and even this is less distinctly heard than it would otherwise be, as the profusion of spray

renders the air near the cataract a very indifferent conductor of sound.

The road to the bottom of the Fall presents many more difficulties than that which leads to the Table Rock. After leaving the Table Rock, the traveller must proceed down the river nearly half a mile, where he will come to a small chasm in the bank, in which there is a spiral staircase enclosed in a wooden building. By descending this stair, which is seventy or eighty feet perpendicular height, he will find himself under the precipice on the top of which he formerly walked. A high but sloping bank extends from its base to the edge of the river; and on the summit of this there is a narrow slippery path, covered with angular fragments of rock, which leads to the Great Fall. The impending cliffs, hung with a profusion of trees and brushwood, over-arch this road, and seem to vibrate with the thunders of the cataract. In some places they rise abruptly to the height of one hundred feet, and display upon their surfaces, fossil shells, and the organic remains of a former world; thus sublimely leading the mind to contemplate the convulsions which nature has undergone since the creation. As the traveller advances, he is frightfully stunned by the appalling noise; for clouds of spray sometimes envelope him, and suddenly check his faltering steps,—rattlesnakes start from the cavi-

ties of the rocks, and the scream of eagles soaring among the whirlwinds of eddying vapour, which obscure the gulf of the cataract, at intervals announce that the raging waters have hurled some bewildered animal over the precipice. After scrambling among piles of huge rocks that obstruct his way, the traveller gains the bottom of the Fall, where the soul can be susceptible only of one emotion, viz. that of uncontrollable terror.

It was not until I had, by frequent excursions to the Falls, in some measure familiarized my mind with their sublimities, that I ventured to explore the *penetralia* of the Great Cataract. The precipice over which it rolls is very much arched underneath; while the impetus which the water receives in its descent projects it far beyond the cliff, and thus an immense Gothic arch is formed by the rock and the torrent. Twice I entered this cavern, and twice I was obliged to retrace my steps, lest I should be suffocated by the blasts of dense spray that whirled around me; however, the third time I succeeded in advancing about twenty-five yards. Here darkness began to encircle me; on one side, the black cliff stretched itself into a gigantic arch far above my head, and on the other, the dense and hissing torrent formed an impenetrable sheet of foam, with which I was drenched in a moment. The rocks were so slippery, that I could hardly keep

my feet, or hold securely by them; while the horrid din made me think the precipices above were tumbling down in colossal fragments upon my head.

It is not easy to determine how far an individual might advance between the sheet of water and the rock; but were it even possible to explore the recess to its utmost extremity, scarcely any one, I believe, would have courage to attempt an expedition of the kind.

A little way below the Great Fall, the river is, comparatively speaking, so tranquil, that a ferry-boat plies between the Canada and American shores, for the convenience of travellers. When I first crossed, the heaving flood tossed about the skiff with a violence that seemed very alarming; but as soon as we gained the middle of the river, my attention was altogether engaged by the surpassing grandeur of the scene before me. I was now within the area of a semicircle of cataracts, more than three thousand feet in extent, and floated on the surface of a gulf, raging, fathomless, and interminable. Majestic cliffs, splendid rainbows, lofty trees, and columns of spray were the gorgeous decorations of this theatre of wonders, while a dazzling sun shed refulgent glories upon every part of the scene.—Surrounded with clouds of vapour, and stunned into a state of confusion and terror by the hide-

ous noise, I looked upwards to the height of one hundred and fifty feet, and saw vast floods, dense, awful, and stupendous, vehemently bursting over the precipice, and rolling down, as if the windows of heaven were opened to pour another deluge upon the earth. Loud sounds, resembling discharges of artillery or volcanic explosions, were now distinguishable amidst the watery tumult, and added terrors to the abyss from which they issued. The sun, looking majestically through the ascending spray, was encircled by a radiant halo; whilst fragments of rainbows floated on every side, and momentarily vanished only to give place to a succession of others more brilliant. Looking backwards, I saw the Niagara river, again become calm and tranquil, rolling magnificently between the towering cliffs that rose on either side, and receiving showers of orient dew-drops from the trees that gracefully over-arched its transparent bosom. A gentle breeze ruffled the waters, and beautiful birds fluttered around, as if to welcome its egress from those clouds of spray, accompanied by thunders and rainbows, which were the heralds of its precipitation into the abyss of the cataract.

The American Fall, which it is quite unnecessary to describe, is higher than the Horse-shoe, its pitch being 164 feet; however, the

quantity of water which rolls over is not nearly so great as in the former. Here, as on the Canada side, there is a wooden staircase, by which the most nervous and timid person may descend to the bottom of the cataract with ease and safety.

The Niagara Falls appear to the observer of a magnitude inferior to what they really are, because the objects surrounding do not bear a due proportion to them. The river, cliffs, and trees, are on a comparatively small scale, and add little to the composition or grandeur of the scene; therefore, he who contemplates the cataracts unconsciously reduces them to such dimensions as correspond with those of the contiguous objects; thus divesting one part of the scene of a good deal of its magnificence, without communicating any additional grandeur to the other.

The extent of the Falls has never been correctly ascertained, as, indeed, their peculiar form, and several other circumstances, render this impossible. The height of the great Fall, as taken with a plumb-line by some engineers from the United States, was found to be 149 feet 9 inches. Its curve is supposed to extend 2100 feet, and its arc may measure nearly half that space. The breadth of Goat Island, which divides the two cataracts, has been found to be 984 feet, and that of the American Fall 1140 feet. Therefore the whole circumference of the

precipice over which the cataracts fall is 4224 feet, and the width of the cataract itself 3240 feet. At one time, the Table Rock extended fifty feet beyond the cliffs that support it, but its projection is not so great at present.

There have been several instances of people being carried over the Falls, but I believe none of the bodies ever were found. The rapidity of the river, before it tumbles down the precipice, is so great, that a human body would certainly be whirled along without sinking; therefore, some of those individuals to whom I allude, probably retained their senses till they reached the edge of the cataract, and even looked down upon the gulf into which they were the next moment precipitated.

Many years ago, an Indian, while attempting to cross the river above the Falls, in a canoe, had his paddle struck from his hands by the rapidity of the current. He was immediately hurried towards the cataract, and, seeing that death was inevitable, he covered his head with his cloak, and resigned himself to destruction. However, when he approached the edge of the cataract, shuddering nature revolted so strongly, that he was seen to start up and stretch out his arms; but the canoe upset, and he was instantly ingulfed amidst the fury of the boiling surge. A dog, which I have seen, was carried

84564

over the Great Fall some years ago, and suffered no injury except the fracture of two of his ribs. Dead wild-ducks are found in great numbers along the banks of the river, near the bottom of the cataract, on the mornings that succeed dark and stormy nights. Some people suppose that these animals are carried over while asleep; but more probably they get entangled among the Rapids above, and are swept away before they are aware of their danger.

The country around Niagara Falls is thickly inhabited, exquisitely beautiful, and in a high state of cultivation; and there are several houses very near the cataract. One, which belongs to Samuel Street, Esq., is but a short distance above the Table Rock, and within a few yards of the magnificent Rapids of the Niagara river. On an eminence, a little way beyond this, stands the residence of the Honourable Thomas Clark, which overlooks the Great Fall, the Rapids, Goat Island, with a considerable part of the river, and commands a prospect beyond all dispute the most sublime and romantic in the world.

I shall now give you a cursory account of the visit I made to Manchester, that I might survey the bridge which was lately erected there, under the auspices of that public spirit and enterprise which eminently distinguish the Honourable

Augustus Porter. I crossed the ferry at Queenston, and undertook the journey on foot, that I might have a full opportunity of examining the banks of the Niagara river from the latter place to the Falls. Goat Island lies about a thousand feet from the American shore, and such is the velocity of the current between the two banks, that most people would consider the scheme of raising a bridge there altogether chimerical, were not the thing already effected. Mr Porter first placed his bridge near the upper extremity of the island, but the ice destroyed it; however, he soon, with admirable spirit and perseverance, commenced another on a better plan, and in a more advantageous situation. This structure, which is now completed, combines, in an eminent degree, both strength and simplicity. Each of the piers is formed of a very strong wooden box, filled with large stones and gravel, sunk in the river, upon which is placed the body of the bridge, consisting of plank, and sufficiently strong and wide to admit carriages of any description. The greatest depth of water under it is about seven feet, and the velocity of the current perhaps exceeds eighteen knots an hour.

Goat Island contains about seventy acres of excellent soil, and is covered with fine timber. A carriage road winds round it, from which

small paths diverge, leading to those parts of its rocky shores, where the different aspects of the Falls and Rapids may be viewed to most advantage. The beauties of this island are equally numerous and enchanting—the variety of prospect it affords is indescribable—the luxuriance and verdure which crown its banks bespeak a paradise; while the wild flowers that adorn them, and are nourished by the spray of the cataract, appear to possess a fragrance and a beauty altogether peculiar and exquisite. Oft-times volumes of snow-white vapour, among which the prismatic colours appear with changeful lustre, float along the cliffs of the island, gloriously enveloping them in the effulgence of Heaven, and, as it were, isolating the terrestrial elysium which they encircle in the bosom of clouds, lest its delights should become common to the rest of the world.

That the Falls of Niagara were at one time much lower down the river than they are at present, is a fact which can be proved alike by reason and observation. The rapidity with which the continual attrition of a large body of water wears away the hardest rocks is known to every one, and has been exemplified in the changes which Niagara Falls have undergone, both in form and position, during the short time they have been under the observation of civilized

beings. Most of the oldest inhabitants of Upper Canada agree in their statements respecting the alteration which has taken place in the shape of the Great or Horse-shoe Cataract, within their recollection. It now indeed bears no resemblance whatever to a horse-shoe, being an irregular concave, with a deep indentation towards its centre. Not more than forty or forty-five years have elapsed since Europeans first began to settle near the Falls; and, consequently, we possess no authentic information about them previous to that time. However, the Iroquois, a formidable and warlike nation of Indians, occupied the country around the head of Lake Ontario for a long period before 1763, when Canada was ceded to Britain; and it has often occurred to me, that if some one would make inquiry among the existing remnant of that tribe, he would probably discover various traditions that might enable us to ascertain where the Falls were situated several centuries ago.

The Falls could not possibly have been farther down the river than Queenston (which is seven miles below their present site), for the pitch or elevation which occasions them begins there, and is called the Mountain. That their site was at this place, seems highly probable from several circumstances. The precipices, which form the two sides of the river, have a close resemblance to

each other in form and outline, and the elevations of their respective strata exactly correspond. The cliffs, in many places, bear distinct marks of the agency of water, sixty or seventy feet above the present level of the river, and are, in a great measure, destitute of that roughness, and those projecting points, which always characterize rocks that have been disunited by a convulsion of nature. At Queenston Ferry, the river is at least one hundred feet deeper than any where below, and there the basin of the cataracts must have been originally, if they ever were so far below their present situation, as it is reasonable to suppose they must once have been.

In the course of a few centuries Niagara Falls will probably desert Goat Island, and, by wearing away the rocks around, leave it isolated in the midst of the river, as a colossal pillar, carved by the resistless hands of nature, and a splendid and astonishing monument, from which posterity, by turning to the records of the present day, may learn what progress the cataracts have made towards Lake Erie, within a certain period of time. When they have worked their way through twenty miles of rock, and reached the mouth of this Lake (if it is allowable even to speculate upon the possibility of such an event), a total change will take place in their form. The largest body of water being always towards the centre of the

cataract, will, by its comparatively greater attrition, make the precipice assume a concave form, similar to what it has at present in the Great Fall; and as Lake Erie is not confined within a narrow channel, like the Niagara river, but extends over a large surface, its waters will not be forced over the precipice in a body, but continue to cover nearly the same space that they occupy at present near its mouth, and thus form a cataract of immense width. However, the torrent towards the centre of the Fall, wearing away the rock with much rapidity, will, as it progresses, gradually cut a deep and narrow channel, in the bottom of which the Niagara river will run; while over the perpendicular cliffs that form the sides of this natural canal, the water that lies towards the shores of Lake Erie will pour, and create a vista of cataracts, perhaps a quarter of a mile long, terminated at its upper extremity by a fall of superior grandeur and beauty.

The Niagara river above the Falls is three quarters of a mile broad, and its Rapids make a near approach to them in magnificence. Between the head of the Rapids and the pitch, a distance of more than a mile, there is a descent of fifty-six feet. The river rushes with terrific and ungovernable impetuosity through a channel composed of rugged rocks, and is converted, by

the resistance it meets with, into an expanse of foam, which stretches almost from shore to shore, and, during sunshine, presents an appearance dazzling and beautiful beyond expression. On looking up the river, the descent is so perceptible, that the upper part of the Rapids meets the horizon; while a fierce and raging torrent, the source of which lies beyond the view, is seen to hurl its perturbed and tumultuous waters with a wildness that would almost seem to prepare them for the horrible comminution they are soon to undergo. Towards the verge of this flood, large jets of spray start up from among the bristling billows, like distant water-spouts upon a stormy ocean. For a little way above the edge of the cataract, the dense expanse of water glides silently along, and then suddenly disappearing, a thick and ascending cloud is seen in its place, while a loud rushing and hollow murmurs convey to the affrighted imagination an idea of the fearful tumult that goes on below.

I must confess, that after I had completed my first deliberate survey of the Falls and Rapids, I felt, I may almost say relieved, when I got out of sight of these wonders of nature, the vastness and sublimity of which create such vivid emotions, that the mind is absolutely fatigued by a long survey of them. On this account, the cataracts of Niagara form a scene with which one

would not wish to become very familiar, nor to contemplate very frequently. The more domestic and unobtrusive features of nature are infinitely better adapted for daily observation, and afford a more quiet and unmingled kind of enjoyment, than those I have been now describing.

LETTER VIII.

Scenery above the Falls—Curious mineral spring—Village of Chippowa—Merchants there—Mode of carrying on business—Scarcity of specie—Barter injurious to honesty—Mouth of Lake Erie—Ferry—Town of Buffalo—Lake Erie—Excursion along its shores—Candiaan taverns—Sugar-loaf country—Frog concert—Extraordinary scene at a cottage—Banks of the lake—Wild vines—Story of an Indian woman and child—Grand River Ouse—Naval post there—Lands belonging to the Mohawks—Night scene upon Lake Erie—Interesting Indian.

A LITTLE way above the Falls, the Niagara river expands into a breadth of two miles, and flows with such a gentle current and placid smoothness, that it resembles a small lake. The American shore is covered with trees, but is unenlivened by houses or inhabitants; while the mingled murmur of the Rapids and cataracts, and the occasional shriek of the wild-duck, are alone heard by him who contemplates the scene; which appears the more delightful, in consequence of its meeting the eye of the traveller immediately after he has been stunned and astonished by the grandeur of the Falls. Thus, two aspects of nature, one the most terrific and tumultuous, the other the most composing and

quiet, are to be found within the short compass of a mile, individually forming a contrast equally agreeable and unanticipated.

Here there is a mineral spring, which issues from the ground, and emits sulphurated hydrogen gas in great quantities. The gas is so pure; that it will take fire, and burn for some time, if a lighted candle is merely applied near the surface of the water. The proprietor of the spring has placed a reservoir and tube over it, that he may be the better able to exhibit the phenomenon of its inflammability to persons who visit the spot. I had no opportunity of analyzing either the gas, or the water from which it is disengaged, or of ascertaining what effects the latter produced upon the human system.

At a little distance beyond this, and at the mouth of the river Welland, which disembogues into the Niagara, stands the village of Chippowa, containing some neat houses, and about one hundred and fifty inhabitants. It has the same relative situation as Queenston, being at the upper extremity of the portage occasioned by the Falls, and having the additional advantage of lying on the banks of a navigable stream, which affords an easy means of communication with a fertile, but partially improved tract of country. The Welland, or Chippowa, is three hundred feet broad at its mouth, and

averages in depth from eight to twelve feet, for more than thirty miles up. Its banks are covered with excellent timber, large quantities of which are annually floated down to supply Messrs Clark and Street's saw-mill near the Falls. This river, having scarcely any current except when swelled by rains, is admirably adapted for steam-boat navigation; but many years must elapse before the trade and population of the neighbouring country will render vessels of this kind necessary.

The village of Chippowa contains a number of merchants, who supply the inhabitants of the surrounding country with goods of every description, and receive produce in payment. All mercantile business throughout the Province, but particularly in the western parts, is carried on by means of barter; circulating medium being so scarce, that it cannot be obtained in exchange for almost any thing. The causes of this deficiency are very obvious; Upper Canada receives the various commodities she requires from the United States, or from the Lower Province, and she must pay money for every thing she buys from the Americans, they having a superabundance of flour, pork, and every kind of produce which she could give in exchange. Thus, almost all the commercial transactions that take place between Upper Canada and the United States are

the means of drawing specie from the former country, and this specie of course never returns to the inhabitants of the Province under any form whatever. Again, the retail merchants send all the money they receive to Montreal, to pay the debts they have contracted there; or, if they do retain any in their own hands, the country is not benefited, for they never put it into circulation. The only channel through which a regular influx of money took place was by the sale of flour; but this is now stopped, as that article has of late brought no price in Lower Canada; and those persons in the Upper Province who used to buy it up, and speculate upon it, can no longer do so with profit or advantage to themselves. Formerly, the farmers received cash for their wheat, because Montreal and Quebec then afforded a ready market; but things are now altered, and the agriculturist rarely gets money for any kind of home produce, in consequence of its being unsaleable abroad.

Specie becomes daily more scarce, and will continue to decrease in quantity, until a European war with America creates a market for the produce of Upper Canada. The inhabitants are continually wishing that the Province may again become the scene of hostilities, not aware that in consequence of this the necessary influx of circulating medium would be as temporary as it for-

merly was, and that the return of peace would be followed by a crisis infinitely more disastrous than any that has yet occurred in the Province. The scarcity of specie is indeed a circumstance highly injurious to the interests of the colony. The farmer is discouraged from raising grain or making agricultural improvements,—mechanics and artizans cannot prosecute their labours with advantage,—and the merchants are obliged to impoverish and oppress the people by exorbitant charges.

The system of barter which exists in the Province, has a very injurious effect upon the character of the peasantry. It necessarily affords many opportunities of cheating to those who are inclined; and I lament to say, that the mass of the inhabitants have more or less of this propensity, which they endeavour to palliate and conceal under the term of "taking advantage," and exercise without injury to their reputations; for, in Upper Canada, a man is thought dishonest only when his knavery carries him beyond the bounds prescribed by the law. Various kinds of deception may be practised by the parties buying and selling, when barter is the medium of exchange. A dollar, for instance, has a specific value, and cannot possibly be made to appear worth more or less than it really is; but other exchangeable articles vary continually, as far as

respects value and quality, both of which points must often be solely decided by the judgment of him who proposes to receive them in barter. The ignorant and inexperienced are thus daily exposed to the knavery and deceit of those who think there is no harm in *taking advantage.*

The road to the mouth of Lake Erie closely follows the windings of the Niagara river, which continues very beautiful, and increases in rapidity as you approach its source. During summer it is generally enlivened by *batteaux* and Durham boats, many of which are daily engaged in the conveyance of goods and military stores from Chippowa to Fort Erie. The road is bordered by farms, which are in a state of tolerable cultivation, and chiefly belong to Dutch people, who retain unimpaired their national characteristics, by rejecting all innovations and instructions as vehemently as the Chinese.

Two miles below the mouth of Lake Erie there is a ferry, which forms the main channel of communication between Upper Canada and the United States. Near it, and on the American frontier, stands the village of Buffalo, which contains a great many neat houses, well-furnished shops, with an active and increasing population. The villages on the American frontier indeed form a striking contrast with those on the Canadian side. There, bustle, improvement, and ani-

mation, fill every street; here, dulness, decay, and apathy, discourage enterprise and repress exertion. It is said, that not one-tenth part of the houses in Buffalo are paid for, and that the greater number of these are already mortgaged. But of what importance are the embarrassments of a few individuals, if society in general derives advantage from the circumstances which occasioned them? The Americans build houses and make improvements entirely for the benefit of posterity, as they generally engage in speculations so disproportioned to their means, that ruin and insolvency overtake them before they can realize what they have projected, or enjoy what they have accomplished.

Lake Erie is two hundred and forty-six miles long, and sixty broad at its widest part. The depth averages from fifteen to eighteen fathoms over its whole extent, and, in consequence of this remarkable shallowness, it becomes rough and boisterous when the wind blows strongly from any point of the compass. At these times a very high and dangerous surf breaks upon its shores, which, in many places, resemble the beach of the sea, being strewed with dead fish and shells, and infested with aquatic birds of various kinds. Often during storms the Lake is covered with such a thick mist, that it is impossible to see to the distance of ten yards from the shore. The

waves then roll with terrific violence from amidst the cloudy obscurity, and suggest to the imagination the appalling dangers which threaten those vessels that are exposed to the tempest; for the navigation of the Lake is rendered highly dangerous, by reefs and projecting points of land, and by the nature of the banks, which, towards its western extremity, are so bold and precipitous, that when a vessel is driven upon them shipwreck becomes almost inevitable. Scarcely a summer passes in which there is not some shipping lost on Lake Erie. South-west winds prevail much during a great part of the year, and often, for weeks together, prevent vessels from sailing westward; hence steam-boats are the craft best suited for the navigation of this inland sea.

The northern shores of Lake Erie are very indifferently provided with harbours, although they contain five; but all these, except one, are so much exposed to the south-west winds, that few vessels can ride securely during a gale from that quarter, or unload, unless the weather is perfectly calm.

I have made several excursions along the shores of Lake Erie, to the distance of eighty miles from its mouth. One, in which I went as far as the Grand River, was productive of several entertaining incidents, and I shall therefore give you an account of it.

It being summer, I left Fort Erie, which is opposite Buffalo, at an early hour, on horseback, and proceeded along the beach of the Lake, which was so smooth and beautiful, that it might have answered for a race-course; but the country bordering upon it being level and thinly settled, the prospect was dull and monotonous, and the continual dashing of the surges fatigued the ear.

About eight o'clock, I reached a small tavern, and stopped to breakfast. Here I found an *independent* host, who, in the true American style, answered each question I put to him by asking another, and shewed such extreme curiosity about my affairs, that, I believe, nothing but the fear of violent treatment prevented him from examining the contents of my portmanteau. Most of the taverns in Upper Canada are indeed a burlesque upon what they profess to be. A tolerable meal can scarcely be procured at any one of them; nay, I have visited several which were not even provided with bread. It is immaterial what meal the traveller calls for, as the same articles will be set before him morning, noon, and night, not even excepting tea, which is considered so essential to comfort; for, if the mistress of the hotel has none of the Chinese plant, she will send one of her children into the woods to gather parts of the evergreen, hemlock, hickory, or other nauseous vegetables, and having made an infu-

sion of the herb brought in, will perhaps inquire of her astonished and shuddering guest, if the tea is sufficiently strong. None of the minor public-houses are provided with servants to attend travellers who put up at them, and therefore, when the landlord is absent, or in an *independent* humour, one is obliged to unsaddle, feed, and take charge of his own horse, otherwise the animal will be totally neglected, for the women disdain to do any thing of this kind.

About twenty miles above the mouth of Lake Erie, is a tract of country called Sugar Loaf, in consequence, I suppose, of its being diversified with numerous little conical hills. A close succession of these extends several miles, and presents an appearance very curious and interesting, but extremely difficult to account for. The hills are of a regular shape, appearing to be, on an average, from twenty to thirty feet high, and consist altogether of sand and earth. The country is thickly settled here, and there are many large cleared spots and cultivated farms to be met with; but, notwithstanding all this, it has a very desolate and forbidding aspect. The beach is covered with huge black rocks, against which the Lake beats with incessant roar, and during spring and autumn thick mists often obscure the face of heaven for days together. Sugar Loaf being environed by swamps, its inhabitants

cannot have any communication with other parts of the country, except during a severe winter, or in the middle of summer.—Here, for the first time, I was gratified with an opportunity of listening to a frog concert, as I passed a mill-pond which swarmed with bull-frogs. The noise which these animals make is so disproportioned to their size, that it startles the ear not a little. At first, several of them utter their notes at intervals, like the performers in an orchestra tuning their instruments; then they all join, as if by one impulse, in a chorus, deep, loud, and discordant, beyond any sound I ever heard produced by animals.

It was now twilight, and as the path had become rather indistinct, I rode towards a house, that I might make some inquiries respecting my route. Several people stood at the door; but as they took no notice of me, I entered the hovel. It contained only one room, and in the midst of this was a bedstead, on which an old man lay, apparently in the last struggles of death. On one side of him stood a boy holding a flaming torch of hickory bark, and on the other was seated a young man, who employed himself in driving away the large blue flies that hummed around the face of the dying person, and sometimes attempted to enter his mouth. I was a good deal startled with the scene, and immediately retired to the door. The group there (as I afterwards

found), consisted of the wife of the old man, a sister-in-law, several relations, and a quack doctor. They were all so deeply engaged in a discussion about the nature of the patient's disease, and the time at which he was *struck* with death, that they seemed entirely to forget he was still alive. The sister-in-law, a sickly, thin, middle-aged woman, insisted that his complaint had arisen from *debilitation*, and gave a long account of her first husband's sickness, when she lived in Schenectady; the others seemed to pay great respect to her authority, all listening with undivided attention, except the wife of the dying person, who was dressing some meat upon a fire they had kindled out of doors. She held a frying-pan in one hand, and a ragged handkerchief in the other, sobbing, and employing herself in cooking, alternately. In a short time, the young man in the house called out, "Come now—he is going;" then the whole party rushed in, and ranged themselves round the death-bed. The hickory torch threw a dull glare upon this singular group, and exhibited, more or less distinctly, the heartless and scrutinizing countenances of those who composed it. The doctor stood at the head of the bed, and near him was the sister-in-law. On one side sat the wife, with a spoon in her hand, while some weeping boys and relatives occupied the other. The struggles of

the dying person were now more feeble—his inspirations could scarcely be heard, and his cheeks assumed that waxy dimness which always precedes dissolution. The sister-in-law had several times attempted to close his eyes, but they more than once started open, with a glassy stare, that seemed to chide her officiousness. However, the spirit soon fled; and the moment this took place, most of the party rushed from the house, sobbing and crying most bitterly. Some hastened to the barn, others to the fields, and some to a shed at a little distance; but three men remained in the house, and began to lay out the corpse. While engaged in this, they frequently had recourse to a bottle of spirits, which each by turns raised to his head, and having drank liberally, handed it to his nearest companion. When the body was properly laid out, the women came in, and put a Bible under its head and a plate of salt upon the breast. These ceremonies being finished, I mounted my horse and hastily pursued my solitary journey, which the impressions left by the scene I had just witnessed rendered doubly unpleasant and gloomy.

I spent the night at the house of a miller, and at an early hour next morning again mounted my horse. The banks of the Lake now became very bold and elevated, sometimes rising to the height of one hundred feet perpendicular and upwards.

They consist entirely of clay and sand; and having been broken and excavated, in a thousand different ways, by the inroads of the Lake, present a very singular and alarming aspect. In some places large bodies of clay projected twenty or thirty feet beyond the main bank, and overhung the beach; while in others, lofty trees, from the roots of which the soil had been washed away, were suspended on the summit by a few fibres, and seemed ready to be precipitated from it, to hurl destruction upon all below. Wild vines of immense magnitude grow upon the tops of these banks, which twine round the stems of large trees, and kill them, apparently by stopping the circulation, as the Boa Constrictor does when he destroys a deer. When one of these vines is removed from the tree it has encircled, deep spiral convolutions will be found in the trunk, which proves that the vine overcomes the resistance offered by the natural growth of the tree.

When tempests happen upon Lake Erie, its waters sometimes suddenly rise to the foot of these perpendicular sand-banks, and beat against them with such dreadful vehemence as entirely to cover the beach. Persons travelling upon it during storms have sometimes perished in the waves, being unable to escape their fury; for the Lake often rises with such rapidity, that one has no chance of gaining a place of safety before he

is overwhelmed by the flood. At these times, the batteaux which coast along are so liable to be driven upon a lee-shore, and beaten to pieces, that those who are on board often abandon their vessels and cargo, and try to save themselves.

A person who resides upon the shore of Lake Erie related to me a very affecting incident which occurred there many years ago. An Indian woman, and her child, who was about seven years old, were travelling along the beach to a camp a few miles distant. The boy observed some wild grapes growing upon the top of the bank, and expressed such a strong desire to obtain them, that his mother, seeing a ravine at a little distance, by which she thought she could gain the edge of the precipice, resolved to gratify him. Having desired him to remain where he was, she ascended the steep, and was allured much farther into the woods than she at first intended. In the meantime, the wind began to blow vehemently, but the boy wandered carelessly along the beach, seeking for shells, till the rapid rise of the Lake rendered it impossible for him to return to the spot where he had been left by his mother. He immediately began to cry aloud, and she, being on her return, heard him, but instead of descending the ravine, hastened to the edge of the precipice, from the bottom of which the noise seemed to proceed. On looking down,

she beheld her son struggling with the waves, and vainly endeavouring to climb up the bank, which was fifty feet perpendicular height, and very slippery. There being no possibility of rendering him assistance, she was on the point of throwing herself down the steep, when she saw him catch hold of a tree that had fallen into the Lake, and mount one of its most projecting branches. He sat astride upon this, almost beyond the reach of the surges, while she continued watching him in an agony of grief, hesitating whether she should endeavour to find her way to the camp and procure assistance, or remain near her boy. However, evening was now about to close, and as she could not proceed through the woods in the dark, she resolved at least to wait till the moon rose. She sat on the top of the precipice a whole hour, and, during that time, occasionally ascertained that her son was alive, by hearing his cries amidst the roaring of the waves; but when the moon appeared, he was not to be seen. She now felt convinced that he was drowned, and, giving way to utter despair, threw herself on the turf. Presently she heard a feeble voice cry (in Indian), "Mamma, I'm here, come and help me." She started up, and saw her boy scrambling upon the edge of the bank—she sprang forward to catch his hand, but the ground by which he held giving way,

he was precipitated into the Lake, and perished among the rushing billows.

Having travelled twelve miles, without seeing a house, or meeting with any human being, I arrived at the mouth of the Grand River Ouse. A naval and a military post tend a little to enliven this place, which would otherwise be desolate enough, the country around being almost uninhabited. Two government schooners and several gun-boats lay in the river, the mouth of which forms but an indifferent harbour, in consequence of its being obstructed by a sand-bank. This varies in magnitude with the season of the year, and is sometimes so high, that the schooners, when wanted for service, must be dragged over it. The Ouse is about a thousand feet broad at its mouth, and may easily be navigated by large boats for more than thirty miles up, the current being moderate, except in a few places. The mouth of this river must form a post of some importance when we are at war with the United States, and might be rendered far more effective than it is at present, were government to strengthen it by raising piers and fortifications; and this seems very necessary, for the Americans must always derive a vast naval superiority on Lake Erie, from the many excellent harbours which abound in its southern shores.

The land near the mouth of the Grand River

is low and swampy, not well suited for agricultural purposes. A large proportion of it belongs to private individuals, the principal proprietor among whom is the Earl of Selkirk. A tract, extending six miles in breadth along each side of this river, from its mouth to its source, was granted to the Mohawk Indians by the British government. They still retain the greater part of this domain in their own hands, though they have at different times given considerable quantities of it to favourite individuals. Other persons, by paying a small rent, hold lands by leases of nine hundred and ninety-nine years duration. This is almost equivalent to actual sale; however, the Indians will not dispose of any part of their possessions, in consequence, I suppose, of the hope they entertain of hereafter receiving a higher price for them than they would at present. The banks of the Grand River are every where highly fertile, except near its mouth, and the command of water-communication gives the inhabitants an advantage over most parts of the adjacent country.

It had been my intention when I left Fort Erie, to have proceeded along the Lake shore forty or fifty miles beyond the mouth of the Grand River; but the account I heard of the nature of the road, and the obstructions to be met

with on the beach, induced me to alter my plan, and determine on returning to Chippowa.

I left the mouth of the Ouse in the morning, intending to reach the ferry upon the Niagara river that night; however, I was disappointed in this expectation. In many places, there are rocky points of land, covered with trees, which stretch a considerable way into the Lake, and of course a great deal of distance is saved, if the traveller proceeds across the bases of these, instead of going round them. I succeeded in this several times, but at last, in attempting it, got completely bewildered, and was unable to reach the Lake shore. After riding nearly an hour in a very uncomfortable state, I came to a house, where I received directions respecting my route, by following which I attained the beach again at a point several miles below the place where I had left it. It was now night, and that thin mist, which in Canada often succeeds the decline of the sun, still dimmed the face of heaven. On one side, the Lake stretched in gloomy stillness towards the horizon; on the other, thick woods skirted the beach, throwing a shade over the greater part of it. Never was I in a situation of such utter loneliness. Occasional gusts of wind swept through the forests with deep and dismal murmurs, and my imagination magnified the sound

of one horse's feet into that made by a whole troop. The indistinct murmur of voices seemed to rise among the cadences of the breaking waves; and I often looked around me, almost expecting to see crowds of the spirits of Indian warriors issuing from the woods in solemn procession, mourning the subjection of their territories, the extinction of their tribes, and breathing curses upon Europeans.

Having rode some distance, I alighted at a rocky recess, and seated myself in it, allowing my horse to brouze upon the shrubbery around. Every flake of vapour had now vanished from the sky, while a blue and ethereal expanse, irradiated by myriads of dazzling stars, over-arched me, and the unruffled bosom of the Lake reflected the whole most lively and minutely. I sat between two heavens, and felt as if lifted from the earth, and placed in the immensity of space, where one would be encircled by unclouded skies. Every thing around me was calm, silent, and motionless, yet what a glow of life, activity, and vigour, did the heavens present! Each star twinkled, sparkled, or blazed, with ever-varying lustre, and a transference of life seemed to have taken place; for the earth, a few hours before so beautiful, alluring, and animated, now appeared a dull and uninteresting mass of matter.

My wanderings, when I lost my way, had oc-

cupied so much time, that I found it would be impossible for me to reach the mouth of the Lake that night, and I therefore requested lodgings at the first house I came to. Here I found several people seated round a fire, merrily drinking cider, and breaking hickory nuts; but what chiefly excited my attention was an Indian, who lay upon a chest in one corner of the room, apparently asleep. As it is not common for people to admit Indians into their houses, I made some inquiries upon the subject, and was told that this man was a very harmless person, except when he got drunk, and that he made it a practice to visit them at intervals of a few months. His name was Robin Turkeyfoot, and he had been very active during the last war. He generally skulked in the woods that skirted the roads, along which the American army was to pass, and shooting any straggler who was weak from wounds or disease, plundered him; however, when he found a good opportunity, he would tomahawk his enemy at once, as, in his own words, it saved powder and ball.

This account, which was given by my host, led the rest of the party into a conversation about Indians, one of whom attempted to utter the war-whoop. Upon hearing this, Turkeyfoot started from the chest with a loud laugh of derision, and began to whoop in great style; on

which, perceiving that we were amused by it, he seemed anxious to exert his powers still further, and accordingly took two Jews harps from a little bag, playing upon each alternately. I asked him how many Americans he had scalped. "Eleven," replied he, "that's all—Would kill more, but Yankey's too *smart*." He was tall, tolerably well made, had sparkling eyes, with black lank hair, and seemed, by the ferocity of his countenance, to be fitted for the commission of deeds such as I have described.

In the morning I pushed on towards Chippawa, after giving my landlord many thanks for his hospitality, being unable to prevail upon him to receive any thing else. I must do justice to the Canadian farmers in this respect: their houses, and the best they afford, are generally at the service of strangers and benighted travellers, so that they appear to more advantage at home than any where else.

LETTER IX.

Lundy's Lane—Orchards—St Catharine's—Salt springs there—A Sunday at St Catharine's—Methodists—Farmers of Upper Canada—Their manners and character—Forests on fire—Emigrants travelling—Yankey and Yorkshireman—Burlington Bay—Coote's Paradise—Village of Ancaster—Deficiency of churches in Upper Canada—Manufactory of maple sugar—Grand River Ouse—Plaster of Paris—Its use in agriculture—Mohawk village—Indians not susceptible of civilization—Acuteness of their senses—Indian department—Presents—Indian secrets—Major Norton.

THE main road, which leads to the head of Lake Erie, commences at Queenston, and follows a westerly course, through the most fertile and cultivated parts of the Upper Province. To gain this, it is necessary to strike across the country from the Falls of Niagara. Nothing interesting is to be met with for a dozen miles, except a beautiful avenue called Lundy's Lane, which is conceived by the Canadians to be a remarkable spot, a very important battle having been fought there between the British and American armies. Peach, apple, and cherry trees, grow on both sides of it, and bounteously project their boughs, loaded with delightful fruit, over the fences, tempting the passenger to lighten them

of part of their treasures, which he may conscientiously do without asking permission of the owners of the orchards.

The traveller joins the main road a few miles below a village called St Catharine's. The village itself presents no claim to notice; but there are several salt springs near it, which were discovered a few years ago, and from which salt of the best quality is now manufactured. This is a circumstance of great consequence to Upper Canada; for she has hitherto imported all the salt she consumes from the United States; and her inhabitants, when we were last at war with that republic, suffered the greatest inconvenience and distress, from the impossibility of obtaining a supply of this necessary article through the usual channel. Saline springs have recently been found in various parts of the Province; and were the government to take proper steps to encourage the manufacture of salt, the country might soon become in a great measure independent of the Onondago works in the United States.

It was Sunday when I first visited St Catharine's, and crowds of well-dressed people were hastening to church. Most of the young women were adorned with a variety of the brightest colours; but they did not seem to have adopted any particular fashion, each dressing herself in the style she conceived to be most becoming.

There was as much vanity and affectation among them as would be found in a congregation of any country church in England; but they assumed greater airs than rustic females are accustomed to do there. The young men who came to church were generally mounted upon jaded farm-horses, the decoration of which seemed to have occupied more of their attention than that of their own persons; gaudy saddle-girths, glittering bridles, and other tinsel accoutrements, being profusely exhibited by these candidates for the admiration of the fair. Large waggons carrying loads of amphibious Dutch, who had probably vegetated in some swamp during twenty or thirty years, occasionally arrived, and conveyed the ponderous *Fraus* and *Mynheers* to the door of the church, which I entered along with the congregation. Presently an old man, dressed in a shewy blue coat, white pantaloons, top boots, and plated spurs, made his appearance, and to my astonishment, proved to be the priest. The form of the service was presbyterian; and during the whole course of it the people continued going out and in without any regard to silence or decorum; while the schoolmaster of the village, with a string of pupils, made his appearance only a few minutes before the blessing was pronounced. At the conclusion of the service, the clergyman gave out a hymn, which was sung

by a party of young men who sat in the church gallery. The sound of a miserably played flute, and a cracked flageolet, united with the harshness of the voices, produced a concert both disagreeable and ludicrous. When the hymn was finished, the preacher proclaimed several marriages, and dismissed the congregation.

Although there has long been an established presbyterian church at St Catharine's, yet a large number of the people in its vicinity profess Methodism, and carry their religious mania to an immoderate height. Meetings are held at different houses, three or four times a-week. At some of these I have seen degrees of fanaticism and extravagance exhibited, both by the preachers and congregation, which were degrading to human nature. Several of the inhabitants of the place, like most other people in Upper Canada, are fond of dancing and playing at cards; but the Methodists, of course, condemn these amusements; for they made it a general practice, to pray that those addicted to them might be converted, and that the Almighty would not let loose his wrath on the village of St Catharine's; while their own lives were, in many instances, one continued outrage against decency, decorum, and virtue.

Between Queenston and the head of Lake Ontario, the farms are in a high state of cultivation, and their possessors are comparatively wealthy.

Some of them contain more than one hundred and fifty acres of cleared land, the fields of which have become smooth and level from frequent ploughing, and are not disfigured by stumps or decayed timber. A great majority of the individuals who are owners of these farms, came to the Province twenty or thirty years ago in the character of needy adventurers, and either received the then unimproved land from government, or purchased it for a trifle. At first they had many difficulties to contend with; but these have now disappeared, and they reap the full produce of their labour, being neither burdened by rents, nor encumbered with taxes. Many of them possess thirty or forty head of cattle, and annually store up two or three thousand bushels of grain in their barns; but this amelioration in their condition, unfortunately, has not produced a corresponding effect upon their manners, character, or mode of life. They are still the same untutored incorrigible beings that they probably were, when, the ruffian remnant of a disbanded regiment, or the outlawed refuse of some European nation, they sought refuge in the wilds of Upper Canada, aware that they would neither find means of subsistence, nor be countenanced in any civilized country. Their original depravity has been confirmed and increased by the circumstances in which they are now placed. Possess-

ing farms which render them independent of the better classes of society, they can, within certain limits, be as bold, unconstrained, and obtrusive, as they please, in their behaviour towards their superiors; for they neither look to them for subsistence, nor for any thing else. They now consider themselves on an equality with those to whom, in former times, the hope of gain would have made them crouch like slaves; and tacitly avow their contempt of the better part of society, by avoiding the slightest approximation towards them, so far as regards habits, appearance, or mode of life.

The excessive obstinacy of these people forms one great barrier to their improvement, but a greater still is created by their absurd and boundless vanity. Most of them really conceive that they cannot be any better than they are, or at least, that it is not worth their pains to endeavour to be so; and betray, by their actions and mode of life, that they are under the influence of an obstinate contentment and unmoveable fatuity, which would resist every attempt that was made to improve them. If they could really be brought to feel a desire for amendment, this effect would most likely be produced by flattering their vanity. If a man wishes to obtain popularity in Upper Canada, he will fail, unless he qualify this passion of the people. When

a farmer proposes to cheat his neighbour, he succeeds by flattering his vanity. If a merchant determines that one of his customers shall pay his account, he flatters his vanity, or serves an execution.

It is indeed lamentable to think, that most of the improved part of this beautiful and magnificent Province has fallen into such "hangmen's hands;" and to feel convinced, that the country will retrograde in every thing that is truly great and desirable, or remain detestable to persons of liberal ideas, as long as these boors continue to be the principal tenants of it. You, my dear friend, will perhaps conceive, that the description I have given of the general character of the people is a good deal exaggerated; but my opportunities of observation have been so numerous and extensive, that I can vouch for the accuracy of every thing I have stated respecting them. But it must be remembered, that I describe them such as they appeared to me, and affected me personally, during the intercourse I have had with them.

While remaining in this part of the country, I had an opportunity of witnessing a scene that was equally magnificent and new to me. The land around was covered with pine trees, and three months' drought had rendered these so dry and combustible, that hundreds of them took fire, in consequence of a few sparks, blown from an oven,

having kindled the brushwood beneath them. Immense volumes of black smoke rolled from different parts of the forest, and, when the wind divided these, the flames were seen raging on every side, and ascending to the tops of the tallest trees; while the roaring, crackling, and crashing, were incessant, under the cloudy obscurity. Large burning splinters of timber, that must have been detached from trees by the expansive power of steam, were sometimes projected high into the air like rockets, and descended again, leaving a showery train of glowing sparks behind them. The wind was hot and suffocating as the vapours from a furnace, and the vast glare of the conflagration overspread the heavens with a copper colour most dismal and appalling. The inhabitants around hurried about in the utmost alarm, momentarily expecting that the flames would communicate to their barns and fences; and the tumult was increased by the bellowing of a number of cattle, which had rushed in a state of terror from the woods, where they had been feeding.

About midnight, the conflagration, which had commenced the preceding day, had in a great measure ceased. Many of the largest trees were charred from top to bottom, and, being now in a state of glowing redness, they stood like dazzling pillars of fire in various parts of the forest.

The upper boughs of others were still enveloped in flames, and resembled meteors as they waved in the wind, the trunks from which they projected being concealed by the darkness. In the morning, I walked out to view the scene of devastation, which presented an aspect truly horrible. Many hundred acres of land were divested of the verdure that had lately covered them. The branchless trees stood in dreary blackness, and the wind scarcely sounded as it swept among them. Not a single bird animated the prospect, and the desolate shriek of the racoon, deprived of its den, alone proved that the tenants of the forest were not entirely extirpated.

During summer, the roads are enlivened by crowds of British emigrants moving westward. Some of them come by way of New York, but the greater number are from Lower Canada; for the Americans contrive to detain among themselves a large proportion of the Europeans, who land upon their shores with the intention of proceeding to the British provinces. The meagre and exhausted horses, the shackling waggons, and the wearied looks of those who attend them, all prove such parties to be sojourners in a strange land; while their personal appearance discovers as plainly whence they have originally come. The ruddy, cheerful look, and plumpness of the Englishman, distinguish him from the people of any

other country, and form a striking contrast with the paleness, dark complexion, and meagre aspect of the native American. " Well now," said one of the latter, advancing to a Yorkshireman, with his hands in his pockets, and his hat stuck on one side of his head, " Well now, I swear I guess you to be from New England."—" Noa," shouted John Bull, " Oos be coomed from Ould England."

Lake Ontario extends westward about forty miles beyond the mouth of the Niagara river, and the head of it forms a spacious harbour, which is called Burlington Bay. High lands, covered with the finest and most beautiful kinds of timber, encircle this bay, affording many picturesque and romantic views, and abound with noble sites for dwelling-houses. Upon these heights is a spot called Coote's Paradise, and a stranger of course anticipates much from the name; but when he reaches it, he finds nothing but a swamp. The person from whom it derived its appellation was Major Coote, an enthusiastic sportsman. He was accustomed to station himself between the above-mentioned swamp and the Lake, and shoot the wild ducks as they passed over him, when they flew from the one body of water to the other. This afforded such exquisite sport, that, in a moment of rapture, he exclaimed, that he was in Paradise; and the place

to which he resorted now currently receives the exalted title he once conferred upon it.

A few miles beyond this is the village of Ancaster, which lies in the midst of a rich, champaign, and well-cultivated country. Here, streams, small valleys, and natural irregularities of the surface, combine to produce a little of that landscape scenery which is so rare in Upper Canada. Ancaster consists of a few dozen straggling houses, and contains between two and three hundred inhabitants. There is a church near it, in which an Episcopalian clergyman officiates every Sunday. Exclusive of this, there are only two places, between Niagara and Ancaster (a distance of fifty miles), where divine service is regularly performed; as the nearest church westward is more than two hundred miles distant from the latter village. Thus, in the space of nearly three hundred miles, there are no more than four villages at which public worship is conducted regularly throughout the year. It is evident that this deficiency in the number of religious establishments must have a fatal effect upon the principles of the people, the majority of whom are truly in a state of most pitiable moral degradation, grossly conceiving, that they never do any thing profligate, vicious, or dishonest, except when they infringe the laws of their country. The Sabbath, presenting no

routine of duties to their recollection, gradually approximates to a week day. They, when it occurs, abstain from labour, more from habit than from principle. They spend the day in idleness and amusement, either strolling among the woods, and shooting game, or wandering between their neighbours' houses. It may be said, that all this is not very criminal, and I will acquiesce partly in the remark; but, when we consider what a beneficent influence a due observance of the Sabbath has upon the minds and dispositions of the lower classes in particular, it will appear a matter of regret, that the fourth commandment should ever be neglected. This becomes the more evident, when we view the contrast which exists between the peasantry of Britain or France and those of Upper Canada. The former, generally speaking, are punctual in the performance of their religious duties, although much bigotry, some self-deception, and a little hypocrisy, may, in many instances, tend to make them strict in this respect; however, they are decorous in their ideas and conduct, humble towards their superiors, and not disposed to knavery. The Canadian peasantry, on the other hand, feeling no religious restraint, are profligate, unamiable, and dishonest.

While in the vicinity of Ancaster, I had an opportunity of witnessing the manufacture of

of maple sugar. The people who engage in this occupation go into the woods in parties, carrying with them the necessary implements, and remaining till they have made as much sugar as they desire; in the same manner as the Arabians do when they visit the forests, for the purpose of collecting the gum which exudes from the Mimosa tree. An incision being made in the lower part of the trunk of the maple tree, a small wooden spout is inserted in it, to convey the sap or juice that flows out into a trough placed beneath. These troughs, when full, are emptied into a large tub or reservoir, and again put under the trees as formerly; while the watery part of the liquor they contained being evaporated by boiling, the residue is purified in various ways, and forms the maple sugar, not more than one pound of which can be obtained from two gallons of sap. It is much inferior to that manufactured from the cane, not being so strong, and having a peculiar manna flavour, which is very unpleasant to those who are unaccustomed to it. The Indians sometimes refine the sugar so highly, that it acquires a sparkling grain and beautiful whiteness: this they put into small birch bark boxes, called *mokowks*, and sell to the white people. The Canadian farmers use the maple sugar almost entirely; for, when they make it themselves, it costs them nothing, and can be procured in abundance, some

families manufacturing four or five hundred pounds weight of it in the course of a season.

Eighteen miles beyond Ancaster the road lies across the Grand River Ouse, my journey to the mouth of which I described to you in my last letter. This river, flowing between its shrubbery-clad banks, and meandering through a fertile and open tract of country, has a most pleasing aspect. The prospect displays a minuteness and an unobtrusiveness, which are strikingly opposed to that vastness and bold magnificence which characterize most of the scenery of North America.

The Grand River is navigable for schooners thirty miles above its mouth, and for large boats much farther. This is a circumstance of great importance, as its banks abound with beds of gypsum, or sulphate of lime, which has been found to form an excellent manure. These are not regularly worked by any one at present, therefore the farmers, who require gypsum, must quarry and convey it down the river themselves, and this being always troublesome and often inconvenient, the mineral is much less employed in agriculture than it ought to be. The sulphate of lime forms a very powerful manure. Two bushels are sufficient for an acre when properly applied, and the effect produced by these continues at least a couple of years. It differs altoge-

ther in its action from common lime, being particularly suitable for light sandy soils that have been exhausted by a repetition of the same kind of crops. Gypsum will soon be in great demand throughout the western parts of the Province; for many of the older farms are nearly worn out, in consequence of the injudicious system pursued by those who cultivate them. The farmers have little idea of the rotation of crops; neither do they endeavour to keep the soil rich and vigorous, by the timely application of manure. Corn succeeds corn, until the land is nearly exhausted, which generally happens in the course of eighteen or twenty years,—a length of time which alike proves its natural excellence, and shews that, under proper management, its fertility would for ages remain unimpaired. The finest and most extensive bed of gypsum that has yet been discovered lies in the township of Dumfries, which belongs to William Dickson, Esq. This gentleman liberally permits the farmers to quarry, and carry away as much of the mineral as they please, free of expense.

Three miles below the Grand River ferry there is an Indian settlement, called the Mohawk village, which contains about two hundred Indians, the majority of whom are half civilized. There is likewise a church, in which the doctrines of the Christian religion are regularly

preached and explained, in the Mohawk language, by an individual belonging to the tribe. The population of the Mohawk settlement varies at different times of the year. When the hunting season approaches, many of the inhabitants forsake their homes and agricultural occupations, and assume, for a time, the savage mode of life from which they have been but partially reclaimed. The habits and dispositions of the Indians are alike opposed to civilization; and those who reside permanently in one place, and cultivate the ground, probably do so that they may avoid the fatigues and privations attendant upon hunting; but their attachment to a wandering life is so strong that even the most civilized of them continually evince an inclination to return to it. The Indians have, for many years past, frequented the European settlements, and even associated, in some degree, with their inhabitants; but I never yet saw any whose manners or dispositions were at all influenced by their intercourse with the white people, except in so far as they had acquired a number of vicious propensities. Most of the former obstinately refuse to assimilate to the latter in any respect, or even to learn from them those arts that would be useful to an Indian; while a communication with the Europeans, instead of improving them, has been the means of divesting them of those rude

virtues and barbarous qualities which alone give a sort of respectability to the savage. Various attempts have been made to civilize the Indians; but the failure of most of these, with the very partial success of others, convincingly proves, that they are a people whose habits and characters are incapable of improvement, and not susceptible of amelioration. Those who reside opposite La Chine, nine miles above Montreal, have made greater advances in the arts of life than any we are acquainted with; but a circumstance that took place among them many years ago, shews that a partial civilization had contributed but little to extinguish their savage propensities. A number of the inhabitants of the village, who had been brought up from their infancy under the Romish missionaries, and instructed in the common branches of education, emigrated to the banks of the river Saskatchawine, where they relapsed into their primitive ignorance and barbarism.

Those straggling Indians, who wander about the inhabited parts of Upper Canada, are not fair specimens of the race of people to which they belong; for an intercourse with the Europeans has rendered them vicious, dissipated, and depraved. Hard drinking has likewise impaired that acuteness of the senses for which the North American Indians are so remarkable; and were

a Mohawk to join any of the tribes who inhabit the north-west territory, his deficiency in this respect would probably subject him to contempt. However, those Indians that frequent the settled parts of the Province, even yet possess faculties of observation which are altogether inconceivable to a European. They find their way through the thickest woods, having no kind of compass to guide them but the moss, which always grows on the north side of the trunk of a tree, and seldom fail to arrive at the very point or spot they proposed to reach when they began their journey. They can discover and follow paths, the existence of which no white person would be aware of, and know, by the appearance of the withered leaves, whether any individual or game has recently passed. Most of them are excellent marksmen; and none ever seem to have the least defect in the organs of hearing or seeing. Civilization and its consequences tend powerfully to destroy that acuteness of the senses, and those bodily perfections which belong to man when in a state of nature, for he loses them in proportion as he ceases to require their aid. But these form the boast and glory of the savage; and the Indians, it is said, often express their pity for the white people, who appear to them to spend life in learning how to live.

The Indians are zealously protected by the

British government, and a number of individuals, who constitute what is called the Indian department, have the immediate management of their national interests and concerns. A medical man visits several of the villages twice a-year, who gives medicine and advice to all who apply for either; and he likewise leaves a few simples with those who understand how to employ them. An annual distribution of presents takes place at the Grand River, and also at the head of Lake Erie, when every Indian receives some trifle that will be useful to him; while, at the same time, articles of dress are given to the females. All this, perhaps, serves in some measure to retain the Indians in the British interests, which was formerly an object of much more importance than it is now; for they are rapidly diminishing in strength and numbers, and could we feel assured that they would, in the event of another American war, remain neutral, the Indian department might be advantageously abolished. The presents they annually receive from the British government tend to encourage their vices and reduce them to misery. After the distribution has taken place, many persons employ themselves in purchasing the articles from their respective owners at a small price. The Indians spend all the money they receive in this way upon spirits; hence drunkenness ensues

—fatal combats take place—and shocking scenes of outrage, intoxication, and depravity, continue until the actors are stripped of all they possess.

The Indians are feeble and useless allies, but dangerous enemies. They were of little benefit to us during the last war, being under no discipline or subordination; and generally taking to flight at the commencement of an action, and returning at its termination, that they might plunder the dead of both armies. However, had they been hostile to us, they might have done incalculable mischief; for their intimate knowledge of the woods, their talents for ambuscade, and the unerring fire of their rifles, would enable them to harass and weaken an enemy, without incurring almost any risk themselves.

The Indians are in possession of some valuable secrets, which nothing will induce them to disclose to any white person. They dye the quills of the porcupine, and other substances, of colours more beautiful and permanent than any we know how to produce, and are acquainted with various vegetables that possess strong medicinal powers. Some can prepare a bait which never fails to allure certain animals into the traps set for them; and almost every Indian knows where salt springs are to be found; but these being the resort of deer, &c. they are particularly unwilling to tell

where they are situated, lest other hunters should frequent them and destroy the game.

The white person who appears to have most influence with the Indians is Major Norton. He has married one of their women, lives among them, talks their language, and conforms to many of their customs. A considerable band rallied round him during the last war; but they are daily decreasing in numbers, and, as a people, have now lost as much of their original strength and importance as the natives of South America did after the conquest of Mexico. In a few years hence, if the population of Upper Canada increases as it has lately done, in all probability not an Indian will be found below Lake Huron.

LETTER X.

Long Point—Change of scenery—Perfume from snakes—Fascination—Frog and black snake—Human beings sometimes charmed by serpents—Instances of it—Theory of fascination—Illustrations—Hawk and chickens—Partridges—Human fascination—Story in proof of it—Long Point described—Iron ore and foundery there—Game—Wild pigeons—Sulphurous spring—Night adventure with an Indian—Conversation with him—Coltman's tavern—Effects of a residence in the woods—Sublimities of the forest.

I SHALL now lead you a ramble through Long Point, which is a tract of country different in appearance from any I have yet described. When I first visited this part of the Province, the sudden change which took place in the aspect of nature seemed like magic. The soil became light and sandy, the forests had dwindled away, and natural groves and copses met the eye in their stead. The fields were beautifully level, and the uncultivated lands had more the appearance of a pleasure-ground than of a wilderness. The trees being small and few in number, and distributed in beautiful clumps, did not at all suggest the idea of a forest, but added charms to the country and variety to the prospect. The day was warm and bright, and autumn had already begun to dye the leaves with tints the most glowing and exquisite. As I travelled onwards,

I was at one time encircled with lovely woods, and refreshed by the fragrance of the wild flowers, which clustered in profusion around the root of almost every tree; and at another, attracted by level and beautifully cleared farms, the fronts of which were generally occupied by extensive orchards.

Being fatigued with riding, I dismounted, and seated myself at the foot of a large tree that overhung a small stream, in which little trout sported incessantly. Every breeze was loaded with vegetable fragrance; but at intervals I felt a most intoxicating perfume, the source of which I was for some time unable to discover. At last I saw two small snakes creep from under a decayed tree that lay near me, and found, from the momentary increase of the odour, and its diminution as they retired, that it proceeded from them. These animals (as I was afterwards informed), while basking in the sun, emit a delightful fragrance; but they are destitute of this peculiarity when dead. I followed the snakes for a little way, and, for the first time, learned that such animals had the power of *fascinating* men. Whenever I advanced within a certain distance of them, they turned round and coiled up,

> ——— and heavenly fragrance filled
> The circuit wide.

Upper Canada is not infested with any snakes

of a dangerous kind, except the rattlesnake, which, however, is very rare in the cultivated parts of the country. Garter snakes and black snakes are to be met with every where, but they seem quite harmless.

In Upper Canada, it is almost universally believed, that snakes possess that power of *fascination* which has so often been denied them by naturalists. Many people have had the fact demonstrated to them by being witnesses of it, and this was the case with me. One summer day, when strolling through the woods, I came to the edge of a small pond of water, on the surface of which floated a frog in a state of motionless repose, as if basking in the sun. I carelessly touched his back with a stick, but, contrary to my expectation, he did not move; and, on viewing him more closely, I perceived that he gasped in a convulsive manner, and was affected with a tremor in his hind-legs. I soon discovered a black snake coiled up, lying near the edge of the pond, and holding the frog in thraldom by the magic of his eyes. Whenever he moved his head to one side or the other, his destined victim followed it, as if under the influence of magnetic attraction; sometimes, however, recoiling feebly, but soon springing forward again, as if he felt

A strong desire with loathing mixed.

The snake lay with his mouth half open, and never for a moment allowed his eyes to wander from his prey, otherwise the charm would have been instantaneously dissolved. But I determined to effect this, and accordingly threw a large chip of wood into the pond. It fell between the two animals—the snake started back, while the frog darted under water, and concealed itself among the mud.

It is asserted by some, that snakes occasionally exert their powers of *fascination* upon human beings, and I see no reason to doubt the truth of this. An old Dutchwoman, who lives at the Twelve Mile Creek in the Niagara district, sometimes gives a minute account of the manner in which she was *charmed* by a serpent; and a farmer told me that a similar circumstance once occurred to his daughter. It was on a warm summer day, that she was sent to spread wet clothes upon some shrubbery near the house. Her mother conceived that she remained longer than was necessary, and seeing her standing unoccupied at some distance, she called to her several times, but no answer was returned. On approaching, she found her daughter pale, motionless, and fixed in an erect posture. The sweat rolled down her brow, and her hands were clenched convulsively. A large rattlesnake lay on a log opposite the girl, waving his head from side

to side, and kept his eyes steadfastly fastened upon her. The mother instantly struck him with a stick, and the moment he made off, the girl recovered herself and burst into tears, but was for some time so weak and agitated, that she could not walk home.

The principle upon which *fascination* takes place is so evident, that there can be no doubt of its existence. Fear alone is sufficient to produce, upon the living system, all those effects that constitute *fascination;* and this may be proved and exemplified by facts, which likewise shew that serpents are not alone possessed of the power in question.

If any one observes a flock of chickens when a hawk is hovering over them, he will perceive that the little animals, instead of endeavouring to escape, run round in concentric circles, and attempt to thrust their heads into the ground; so that it appears this dereliction of instinct is evidently occasioned by simple fear. The mode of shooting partridges practised in America is founded upon the principle of fascination. The partridges there, when raised in a covey, generally settle upon the lower branches of a tree, and the sportsman can kill the whole flock, if his dog sits under the roosting place and barks at the birds. They are so completely entranced by the voice and gaze of the animal, that they neither hear the sound

of the fowling-piece nor see the smoke, and suffer themselves to be deliberately shot at, without making any attempt to escape; but if the dog leaves his station for a moment, they will all take flight.—I was once present in a country church, when a man received a public rebuke from the clergyman, for certain misdemeanors he had committed, which were not cognizable by the civil law. The priest had a fine face and an impressive delivery, so that he soon caught the offender's eyes, and held them fixed upon him during the whole of his discourse. The culprit gazed upon his monitor with imploring looks, while the confusion that tinged his cheeks showed how anxious he was to conceal his face; but he could not, for the other had spell-bound him so completely, that he absolutely hung upon his looks, and even involuntarily imitated his gestures. When the pastor had closed his admonition, the culprit sat down, and looked around with the air of one awakening from a trance. Having shewn by this instance, that the power of *fascination* is inherent in some men, it will be unnecessary for me to say any thing about the degree in which the female sex possess it, and I shall merely observe, that in Upper Canada, a traveller runs more risk of being *charmed* by *their* eyes than by those of the rattlesnake.

The tract of country named Long Point is not

characterized by a partial beauty or luxuriance. Nature has been equally bountiful to every part of it, and no one can attain a correct idea of its charms, or form a just estimate of its advantages, unless he makes a journey through it. The land is so little overspread with timber, that if the brushwood is cleared away, it may be cropped without cutting down a single tree. The soil is indeed inferior, in point of strength and richness, to that in various other places; but these defects are compensated for by its easy tillage, and the facility of clearing it. Long Point is abundantly watered by pure, transparent, and never-failing streams; the openness of the woods, and the dryness of the land, render the air mild, clear, and salubrious; fruit-trees of every kind bear abundantly, and soon arrive at maturity; the roads are always good; and Lake Erie affords a convenient water-communication with the other parts of the Province. Upon the whole, no other part of Upper Canada possesses so many natural advantages, or is so well suited to the ideas and taste of Europeans, as Long Point; it being, I believe, one of the most alluring and desirable spots that a bountiful Providence has any where laid open for the benefit of man.

Long Point abounds with game of various kinds, and the woods, from their openness, are favourable to the pursuit of it. Partridges spring

from the copses, and deer often bound across the path of him who traverses the forests. Immense flocks of the passenger, or wild pigeon, frequent this and the other parts of Upper Canada during spring and autumn; and myriads of them are killed by fire-arms, or caught in nets by the inhabitants; for they fly so close, and in such numbers, that twenty or thirty may sometimes be brought down at a single shot; yet the multitudes that are to be met with in Canada are trifling indeed when compared with those millions that visit the United States, where, according to Wilson the ornithologist, they sometimes desolate and lay waste a tract of country, forty or fifty miles long and five or six broad, by making it their breeding place. While in the State of Ohio, he saw a flock of these birds, which extended, he judged, more than a mile in breadth, and continued to pass over his head at the rate of one mile in a minute during four hours, thus making its whole length about two hundred and forty miles. According to his moderate estimate, this flock contained two thousand two hundred and thirty millions, two hundred and seventy-two thousand pigeons—a number altogether inconceivable, and almost beyond belief, were we not in possession of indisputable authorities which prove that his calculation was not exaggerated.

The projection of land termed Long Point, from which the adjacent country derives its name, extends twenty-five miles into the Lake, and vessels bound westward often find much difficulty in weathering it. On its eastern side is a tolerably good and commodious harbour, and the Lake is deeper there than at any other place. The base of Long Point abounds with rich iron ore; and a foundery has recently been erected there, which will soon be put in operation, and cannot fail to prove a most beneficial establishment to the people of the western parts of the Province, who at present purchase, at a very high rate, the iron ware which the merchants procure from the village of Three Rivers below Montreal.

Near Long Point there is a mineral spring very strongly impregnated with sulphur. The water issues from a hole in the ground, and after running a little way, forms a basin, which is about twenty yards in circumference, and of considerable depth. Its sides are incrusted with pure sulphur, and the mineral odour can be felt at the distance of a quarter of a mile. The person, to whom the spring belongs, told me that its efficacy was great in cutaneous diseases, when used both externally and internally, and that he proposed, the ensuing season, to erect baths upon it for the accommodation of the public.

Once, when on my way from Long Point to the Talbot Settlement, night overtook me before I reached the house where I intended to sleep; but the moon shone brightly, and the air being mild, I rode onwards at a slow pace. Suddenly my horse started in a violent manner, and, on looking round to discover the cause of his alarm, I observed a glare of light proceeding from behind the root of a large tree that had been blown down by the wind. Having secured my horse, I proceeded to the spot, and found an Indian lying beside a fire; a profusion of long black hair hung around his face and shoulders—his mocassins and blanket-vest were sprinkled with blood—and his half-unsheathed scalping-knife gleamed in the ruddy light of the flames. He grasped his rifle with one hand, while the other rested upon a tomahawk which was stuck in his girdle. As I stood watching him with anxiety, he suddenly started up, and, on seeing me, laughed aloud. My alarm was speedily dissipated, when I perceived that a deer had been the victim of the horrible murder which I had previously conceived him to have perpetrated. He had quartered the animal, and tied up the greater part of it in the skin, which he threw over his shoulder, and walked to the road with me. I soon found that he spoke English extremely well, and as he told me he was on his way to the next house, where

he hoped to sell his venison, we kept company and entered into conversation. To my astonishment, he made many inquiries about the reform meetings, then very common throughout Britain, and seemed anxious to learn the causes of them, and their object. In return, I asked him how he got the information he already possessed, and if he could read: "No," said he, laconically, "but I can hear." He seemed to regard the Europeans, and all the advantages they derived from civilization, with much contempt and indifference, and observed, that the Great Spirit shewed that he preferred Indians to any other people, for he taught them to live in the woods, to find their way through the forests, and to acquire many wonderful secrets, all which things were denied to the white men. I then begged him to tell me some of the secrets he alluded to; "No, no," returned he, smiling archly, "for that would make you equal to me." I next inquired, if the missionaries had come among his tribe, and if they had converted any of its members to the Christian religion. He informed me, that missionaries had once visited the chiefs of his nation, but that no one would listen to them; for, though they talked much about the superiority of their faith, and its beneficial influence upon men, every person knew that they said what was not true; and as long as the

white people got drunk, told lies, and cheated Indians, his nation would have doubts about the goodness of their religion, and prefer that which the Great Spirit had given before it.

About nine o'clock I arrived, in company with this Indian, at Coltman's tavern, which is six or seven miles distant from any habitation. Coltman has spent a dozen years in the woods, never seeing any one except his own family and accidental travellers; and this long seclusion has communicated a delightful drowsiness to his countenance, which, although he is very anxious to know what is going on in the world, never suffers any change of expression, whatever be the character of the intelligence he receives. I have observed that this lethargic insensibility gradually attaches itself to all those who reside long in the solitude of the forest. The sympathies which once bound them to the world, and made them feel a common interest with the rest of mankind, are in the course of time broken and annihilated, and they listen to details of recent battles, murders, earthquakes, and conflagrations, with as much *nonchalance* as if the events had happened in a planet that had long since ceased to exist. How different are their feelings from those of the restless village politician, who stands shivering several hours at the post-office, during a winter day, that he may learn how many of Lord

Castlereagh's windows were broken by the last London mob! In fact, their habits of thought at length become assimilated to those of the Indians, and they conceive that they have wandered out of their sphere, whenever they mentally or sensibly lose sight of the wilderness.

In a little time Mr Coltman produced some delightful venison, which, contrary to the Canadian custom, had been kept three or four weeks. It was in such a fine state, that it almost fell into powder under the knife. As I did not find the society which the house afforded very congenial, I wandered into the woods after supper.

How feeble do those emotions, which the mind derives from cultivated scenery, appear when contrasted with the sublime flow of ideas that is generated by solitary wanderings in the pathless wilderness. There, the soul finds no difficulty in detaching itself from the limited thoughts of ordinary life, and rising upon the pinions of that enthusiasm, which enables it to understand the thrilling language of unsophisticated nature.—The sombre forests standing erect in impregnable strength, and stretching their boughs into the deep, cold, blue, sky—the stars rising in solemn and unobtrusive grandeur—the stupendous galaxy moving round in solemn silence through the immensity of space—the moon clothing the trunks of trees in phosphoric

brightness—and the roar of distant cataracts, swelling and fading upon the ear like the murmurs of Eolian harps, produce a flood of harmonious feelings too full of mystery to be accounted for. It is like some grand and awful strain of music, that makes one shed tears, shiver, and almost wish to die. At these times the wilderness is filled with noiseless voices, which can be heard by the heart alone—while every breeze that sweeps through it becomes spiritualized, and seems fraught with the mystic language of the elements.

LETTER XI.

Talbot Settlement—Its founder—Distribution of lands—First occupants of a new settlement—Slow improvement—Condition of the inhabitants of the Talbot Settlement—Emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland—Their clannishness—State of society in the Settlement—Natural depravity of man—State of mind during a residence in the Settlement—Physiognomy of the material world.

THE Talbot Settlement, to which I now propose to direct your attention, commences about thirty miles beyond Long Point, and forms the only monument of the colonizing exertions of an individual, that Upper Canada exhibits. This settlement is interesting in a double point of view, both as it shews how much can be accomplished by the well-directed energies of an enterprising person, and as it is the land of promise to which emigrants, native Americans, and Canadians, are daily flocking in vast numbers. The excellence of the soil, the condensed population, and the superiority of climate, which characterize this settlement, all combine to render it more agreeable, and better suited to the lower orders of Europeans, than any other part of the Province.

This settlement owes it origin and present

magnitude to the exertions of Colonel Talbot, a person of birth and fortune, who, in the year 1802, took up his residence in the wilderness, for the sole purpose of forming a colony around him. He encountered all those difficulties that invariably occur under similar circumstances, and was likewise strenuously opposed by some of the minions of the Provincial government; however, he has accomplished his object; for that tract of country, which, ten or twelve years ago, hardly knew the foot of man, now swarms with thousands of active settlers.

The Talbot Settlement lies parallel to the shore of Lake Erie, and consists of two great roads, which extend seventy or eighty miles, besides back settlements. The object in giving it such a longitudinal form was, that a road might be opened to the head of Lake Erie, and this has consequently been effected, much to the advantage of the Province in general. The tract of country in which the settlement lies, was placed by government under the superintendence and management of Colonel Talbot, and no one can obtain land there without applying to him. At first, lots, containing two hundred acres, were given to emigrants; but, when both roads were planted through their whole extent, the quantity was reduced to one hundred acres. The settler is obliged to clear ten acres of land, to build a

house of certain dimensions, and to open one half of the road in front of his farm, within the space of three years;—regulations equally beneficial to the country in general, and advantageous to the occupier of the lot.

The first view of a new settlement excites pleasing emotions. It is delightful to see forests vanishing away before the industry of man; to behold the solitude of the wilderness changed into a theatre of animation and activity; and to anticipate the blessings which a bountiful soil will lavish upon those who have first ventured to inhabit its bosom. A new field seems to be opened for human happiness; and the more so, as those who people it are supposed, by the casual observer, to have been the victims of poverty and misfortune while in their native land. But a deliberate inspection will destroy all those Arcadian ideas and agreeable impressions. He who examines a new settlement in detail, will find most of its inhabitants sunk low in degradation, ignorance, and profligacy, and altogether insensible of the advantages which distinguish their condition. A lawless and unprincipled rabble, consisting of the refuse of mankind, recently emancipated from the subordination that exists in an advanced state of society, and all equal in point of right and possession, compose, of course, a democracy of the most revolting

kind. No individual possesses more influence than another; and were any one, whose qualifications and pretensions entitled him to take the lead, to assume a superiority, or make any attempt at improvement, he would be strenuously opposed by all the others. Thus, the whole inhabitants of a new settlement march sluggishly forward at the same pace, and if one advances in the least degree before the others, he is immediately pulled back to the ranks.

That this has hitherto been the case, in most settlements, can be proved by a reference to facts. The farmers of the Niagara district, many of whom have been thirty or forty years in the country, and now possess fine unencumbered farms, are in no respect superior to the inhabitants of the Talbot Settlement. They are equally ignorant, equally unpolished, and one would suppose, from their mode of life, that they were equally poor. Their minds have made no advance, and their ideas have not expanded in proportion to the increase of their means. Is it then to be supposed, that the people, who now fill the new settlements of Upper Canada, and carry with them similar ideas and prejudices, will make greater progress in improvement, than persons of the same description have done before them?

Few of the farms in the more improved parts of the Province retain their original owners, who

have generally been bought out by people of similar habits, but greater wealth; and new settlements have hitherto almost invariably changed their inhabitants, within ten or twelve years after their commencement. It is to be hoped, that this will be the fate of the Talbot Settlement, and that its present occupants will henceforth gradually disappear, and be succeeded by a population of a superior kind. That this will be the case seems highly probable; for emigrants of some capital now begin to make their appearance in the Province, and most of them will of course rather purchase partially improved farms at a moderate rate, than expose themselves to the hardships and difficulties that attend the clearing and cultivation of waste land. The advantages which the Talbot Settlement presents, will induce many persons of this description to take up their residence in it, more especially, as a large number of the farms will soon be offered for sale, at a low price, by their present possessors.

The Talbot Settlement exhibits more visibly than any other part of the Province, these advantages, and that amelioration of circumstances, which Upper Canada affords to the peasantry who emigate from Europe. Nine-tenths of the inhabitants were extremely poor when they commenced their labours, but a few years' toil and

perseverance has placed them beyond the reach of want. All of them have rude houses and barns, also cows and oxen, and innumerable hogs. Some of the wealthier settlers feed sheep, but on most lots the quantity of cleared land is so small, that they cannot afford to lay much of it out on pasture. Most of the settlers might live much more comfortably than they do at present, if they exerted themselves, or had any ideas of neatness and propriety; but they follow the habits and customs of the peasantry of the United States, and of Scotland, and, consequently, are offensively dirty, gross, and indolent, in all their domestic arrangements. However, these, it is to be hoped, are temporary evils, and do not at all affect the conclusions that a view of this settlement must force upon every unprejudiced mind. It is evident, that the advantages to be derived from emigration to Upper Canada, are not altogether chimerical, as has been too generally supposed; but that, in so far as concerns the lower classes of Europeans, they are equally numerous and important, as some of our most sanguine speculators have represented them to be. No person, indeed, will pretend to say, that the settlers, whose condition I have described, are in a way to grow rich; but most of them even now enjoy abundant means of subsistence, with the earnest of increasing comforts; and what state of

things can be more alluring and desirable than this to the unhappy peasantry of Europe?

Great numbers of emigrants, from the Highlands of Scotland, have lately taken lands in the upper part of the Talbot Settlement. These people, with the *clannishness* so peculiar to them, keep together as much as possible; and, at one time, they actually proposed, among themselves, to petition the governor to set apart a township, into which none but Scotch were to be admitted. Were this arrangement to take place, it would be difficult to say which party was the gainer, the habits of both being equally uncouth and obnoxious. However, the Scotch, notwithstanding their dislike to an American and Canadian neighbourhood, do not fail to acquire some of those ideas and principles that are indigenous to this side of the Atlantic. They soon begin to attain some conception of the advantages of equality, to consider themselves as gentlemen, and become independent; which, in North America, means to sit at meals with one's hat on; never to submit to be treated as an inferior; and to use the same kind of manners towards all men.

I resided many months in the Talbot Settlement, and during that time enjoyed abundant opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of its inhabitants, who form a democracy, such as, I be-

lieve, is hardly to be met with in any other part of the world. The difference in point of wealth, which exists among them, is as yet too trifling to create any distinctions of rank, or to give one man more influence than another; therefore, the utmost harmony prevails in the colony, and the intercourse of its people is characterised by politeness, respect, and even ceremony. They are hospitable, and, upon the whole, extremely willing to assist each other in cases of difficulty.—But the most extraordinary thing of all is, the liberality which they exercise towards emigrants, in immediately admitting them to live on an equality with themselves; for any poor starving peasant, who comes into the settlement, will meet with nearly the same respect as the wealthiest person in it, captains of militia excepted. The Scotch and English emigrants are frequently, at first, a good deal puzzled with the consideration with which they are treated, and, when they hear themselves addressed by the titles, *sir*, *master*, or *gentleman*, a variety of new ideas begin to illuminate their minds. I have often observed some old Highland crone apparently revolving these things within himself, twitching his bonnet from one side of his weather-beaten brow to the other, and looking curiously around, as if suspicious that the people were *quizzing* him. However, those who are at first most sceptical

about the reality of their newly-acquired importance, generally become most obtrusive and assuming in the end; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that, in Upper Canada, the *ne plus ultra* of vanity, impudence, and rascality, is thought to be comprised under the epithet *Scotch Yankey*.

A deliberate inspection of a new settlement cannot fail to sink mankind lower in the estimation of the observer, than, perhaps, they ever were before. Human beings are there seen in a state of natural and inexcusable depravity, that can neither be palliated nor accounted for in any way, except by referring its origin to those evil propensities which appear to be inherent in all men, and which can be destroyed or counteracted only by the influence of reason, religion, and education. The apologists of the human race vainly tell us, that men are rendered vicious by artificial means, and that they are excited to evil by those miseries, disappointments, and oppressions, which are inseparable from an advanced and cultivated state of society. If we examine the wilds of North America, we will find men placed beyond the reach of want, enjoying unbounded liberty, all equal in power and property, and independent of each other. Such a combination of happy circumstances would seem well adapted to extinguish and repress evil habits and vicious

propensities; but it has no effect of the kind whatever, for the inhabitants of the bountiful wilderness are as depraved in their morals, and as degraded in their ideas, as the refuse population of a large city. It will be found, that the lower classes are never either virtuous, happy, or respectable, unless they live in a state of subordination, and depend in some degree upon their superiors for occupation and subsistence.

The time I lived in the Talbot Settlement comprehended, I believe, some of the happiest days I have ever passed in the course of my life. My enjoyments were not indeed derived from, or at all connected with, the place where I resided, it being destitute of every thing that could render existence agreeable. Although I spent my hours entirely by myself, sometimes scarcely seeing or speaking to any person for days together, I never knew what languor or weariness was. My mind gradually expanded, as its dependence upon itself became more necessary. My imagination brightened,—my perceptions of the great and beautiful increased, and a non-intercourse with the world seemed, by divesting the soul of that mist in which the daily business of life never fails to involve it, to enable me to see, feel, and believe things I had never participated in before; in the same way as soli-

tude and abstinence are thought to operate in rendering men more capable of holding communication with superior beings.

While in this state of mind, I recollect seeing *Plutarch's Lives* in the house of a farmer, and borrowing them. The impressions I received, while perusing this book amidst the awful solitude of the forest, never will be effaced from my heart. The pictures of moral grandeur which it presented to my mind were in strict consonance with the magnificence of the material world that surrounded me; and being in some measure abstracted from human society, my estimate of that intellectual mightiness, which characterized the great spirits of ancient times, was not affected or disturbed by an intrusive sense of the degeneracy of modern days.

I had likewise *one* number of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, as a companion of my solitude, which afforded me many moments of delight. This work, among other things, contained Coleridge's Hymn to Mont Blanc: what could be more adapted to my frame of mind than this grand melody, this sublime effusion! The trees, the sky, the rocks, and the rushing waters, express comparatively little when viewed in the vicinity of a city, but they assume a far deeper character, if surveyed from the depths of the wilderness.

There, every object acquires new lineaments, and a spiritual character appears in every feature of the material world, although we cannot hear nature speak, nor understand the sympathies that pervade her different parts.

LETTER XII.

Journey to the head of Lake Erie—Picturesque group at a tavern, and characteristics—River Thames—Interesting scene upon it—Delaware village and hotel—The Long Woods—A snow-storm there—Scene in an Indian wigwam—Alarming accident and subsequent difficulties—Singular means of extrication—Assisted by an Indian—His hospitality—Ward's tavern—Interesting adventure at midnight—Settlement upon the bank of the Thames—Its present state—Mineral oil—Quack doctor and patient—Town of Chatham—Lake St Clair—French Canadians—Climate and fruit upon the Detroit river—Sandwich and Amherstburgh—North-west country—Lakes Huron and Superior.

I SHALL now draw my travelling details towards a conclusion, by presenting you with a sketch of the journey I made from Talbot Road to the head of Lake Erie, and to the most westerly settlement in Upper Canada.

My path lay along one of the cross-roads of the Talbot Settlement, and I amused myself with observing how gradually the marks of civilization receded from my view. During the early stages of my journey, houses, cleared land, fences, cattle, and barns, met my eye on every side; but, as I advanced, the dwellings diminished into mi-

serable hovels, the woods became contiguous to the road, the domestic animals disappeared, and the fields were encumbered with fallen timber; the changing aspect of the country thus marking the space of time that had elapsed since the inhabitants first commenced their agricultural labours.

About sunset I stopped at a house to feed my horse. Having given directions to the landlord, I entered the outer apartment, and found a mixed assemblage of persons seated round the fire. On one side sat several Scotch Highlanders smoking tobacco, muttering Gaelic, and surveying with suspicious scrutiny the rest of the company; opposite them were three Indians in full hunting costume; and a couple of New England Americans, with some children belonging to the house, completed the group. The New Englanders talked volubly about politics, recounted many incredible stories of their own prowess, and intermingled the whole with oaths and impious expressions. The Scotch eyed them with a scowl of vacant curiosity, often shrugging their shoulders and sullenly shaking their heads. The attention of the Indians was directed to a miniature wind-mill, which a child attempted to turn by the blasts of an old pair of bellows. I now had an opportunity at once of contemplating three different descriptions of human beings.

and of estimating what had been the influence of circumstances upon their respective characters. The Scotch peasants had been degraded by a life of poverty, servitude, and ignorance. Their ambitious propensities had never been developed, nor had their ideas ever strayed beyond the circumscribed limits of their homes. They knew nothing of the world; but their natural cunning, stupidity, and selfishness, formed the impregnable guardians of their own interests. The New Englanders, on the other hand, unaccustomed to subordination, stood much higher in their own estimation. They had ventured to think independently upon most subjects, and assumed the character of men of the world. They were not fettered by vulgar associations like the Scotch, and were shrewd in proportion; but in consequence of their want of education, and their being independent of the enlightened part of society, they were destitute of any sort of principle either moral or religious. The Indians possessed a sort of negative superiority over both parties, having no absolute vices, and being exalted by those virtues that generally belong to the savage. Though untutored, they were not in a state of debasement, and they seemed more entitled to respect than either the Scotch or Americans.

It was nearly dark when I remounted my

horse. The moon had indeed arisen, but, in consequence of the cloudiness of the sky, I derived but little benefit from her light. I still had eight miles to ride before I reached the side of the river Thames, where I intended to remain during the night. When I had proceeded about half way, I inadvertently left the main road, while the increasing narrowness and intricacy of the path I then followed soon convinced me that I had taken a wrong course; however, upon hearing the sound of voices, I continued to advance, and soon found myself on the bank of the Thames. A vivid glare of light illumined every object around, but, as there was a little turn in the course of the river, I could not at first discover whence the radiance proceeded; in a few moments, however, a large raft, in which were five Indians and a blazing fire of hickory bark, appeared floating down the stream. Two of the Indians held torches in their hands, and a couple of dogs sat in a small canoe that lay alongside. A column of smoke rose from the fire, which, extending itself into ruddy volumes, hovered above the raft like a canopy, as it slowly glided down the refulgent current of the Thames, and rivetted my eyes. My attention was soon drawn to the opposite shore by a young deer, which had sprung from the thicket, and stood stedfastly gazing upon the savages in an att.

tude of beautiful astonishment. In a moment three rifles were levelled at it. They were discharged, and it dropped down. The Indians raised a triumphant shout, and waved their torches, while a couple of them jumped into the canoe, and, accompanied by the dogs, paddled rapidly to the shore. But when they landed, the deer, which had merely been wounded, sprung upon its legs again, and rushed into the forest. The dogs being despatched to turn it, barked incessantly; the Indians on shore shouted and whistled to encourage them, and those upon the raft called loudly to their companions in tones of anger and impatience. The dogs soon succeeded in getting a-head of the deer, and driving it to the shore, but it immediately plunged into the river, and, having swam towards a little bay that lay in the shade, it disappeared, to the great disappointment of the hunters. The raft had now floated far below the point at which the Indians had landed with the canoe, so that they hastily embarked, and paddled down the stream towards it. When they reached their companions, they were taken on board, and the whole party moved down the river, illumining the woods, and decoying their inhabitants into destruction.

This kind of hunting is practised, I believe, by the North American Indians only. The brightness of the fire allures the deer, and several other

kinds of game, to the sides of the river, where they are so much exposed to the shots of the hunters, that they very rarely escape.

Having retraced my steps until I gained the main road, I soon reached a place called Delaware, where I intended to remain during the night; and which has some claim to the name of a village, as there is a saw-mill near it, and a few houses within view of each other. Here I enjoyed all the comforts that are usually to be met with in Canadian hotels; and, after supping on bread and *hemlock tea*, and supplying my horse with buck wheat and wild hay, I went to bed at an early hour, that I might next morning be the better able to accomplish a journey through what are called the *Long Woods*. The road lies through thirty-seven miles of uninterrupted forests, and there is only one human habitation in the course of all that distance. The road being very indifferent, the traveller cannot in one day proceed beyond the house alluded to, which is twenty-four miles from Delaware.

In the morning I was ferried over the Thames on a raft. It was now the end of December, and a drifting snow-storm threatened to make my journey a very unpleasant one, nay I even felt a little intimidated, for I had heard stories of persons perishing in the Long Woods, from cold and exhaustion. After I had crossed the river, I

passed several miserable huts, which are occasionally occupied by a few Delaware Indians, who exhibit some faint traits of civilization in their mode of life; and these were the last vestiges of human agency that met my eyes during the day. The road was, in many places, extremely bad, and I frequently dismounted and walked, that I might relieve my horse, and, at the same time, keep myself warm by the exercise. When about nine miles beyond Delaware, I came to the remains of a large Indian wigwam, and, as the snow fell thickly, I went into it, and sheltered myself under the bark. Although it was mid-day, not the faintest nor most distant murmur could be heard. The flakes of snow fell in noiseless succession among the boughs of the leafless woods that encompassed me. The sky was sombre, while the weather had a calmness that amounted to solemnity. Several fragments of Indian utensils, and likewise the skull of a deer, lay near me, while the blackness of one spot of ground shewed where a fire had once been. It seemed almost inconceivable, that human beings should be permanent inhabitants of this wilderness,— that domestic ties and affections should often brighten the gloom of such a solitude,—and that those leading passions, which agitate the hearts of all men, should be elicited and

brought into action amidst the appalling loneliness and depressing monotony of the boundless forest. The decaying vestiges of human existence, which the wigwam exhibited, made the scene appear more desert and affecting than it would otherwise have done.

The tract of country called the Long Woods comprehends about one hundred and ninety thousand acres of land, which will soon be surveyed into townships and lots, and laid open for the location of actual settlers. The soil appears to be extremely good, but rather lighter than that of the Talbot Settlement; and the timber which grows upon it, though not heavy, is of the best and most useful kinds. Notwithstanding the remote situation of the Long Woods, many hundreds of people are now waiting for an opportunity to occupy lands in them; so that this wilderness, at present so obnoxious to the generality of travellers, will probably become, in the course of a few years, one of the most populous and best cultivated tracts in the western part of the Province.

In the afternoon the storm abated, and the clouds forsook the sky. I had travelled during the greater part of the day at a very slow pace; for such was the badness of the road, that I more frequently walked than rode; and the way seem-

ed wearisome beyond description, as there was no means by which I could ascertain how far I had still to go.

About sun-set I came to the edge of a creek, the bridge over which had fallen into such disrepair that it was altogether impassable; however, a large tree lay across the stream, and I attempted to lead my horse along this; but its height above the water terrified him so much, that he started violently back, pulled the bridle from my hand, and gallopped off. You may easily conceive the consternation I felt at this accident; for I knew that if he took to the woods, I would inevitably lose him for ever, along with my portmanteau, which contained many things of value; however, I had sufficient presence of mind to follow him cautiously, lest my sudden appearance should again alarm him. I walked about a quarter of a mile in a state of distressing anxiety, and then, on reaching a turn of the road, perceived my runaway browzing the shrubs at a little distance. By making a short circuit through the woods I got a head of him unperceived, and caught hold of the bridle again without much difficulty. But my troubles were not at an end, for I soon perceived that my portmanteau was amissing; and aware that it must have been torn off while my horse was passing through the woods contiguous to the road, I tied him to a

tree, and went in search of it. In my anxiety to recover what was lost I neglected to mark the course in which I wandered, and when I had the good-fortune to meet with my portmanteau, I found myself completely bewildered, and continued vainly looking for the road during, I suppose, half an hour; in the course of which time I thrice unexpectedly returned to one particular spot. It is impossible to describe the sensations I felt on conceiving that I had entirely lost it. My mind became as it were a perfect blank—the faculties of observation and discrimination seemed to be effaced—and my memory lost all recollection. I stood still in a state of quiet despair, and knew not what might have been the consequence, had not one resource occurred to me, the successful issue of which perhaps saved my life. I had been accustomed to call my horse from the pasture by whistling to him in a particular way, and I now put this in practice. He immediately answered me by neighing, while I advanced in the direction of the sound, and after repeating this kind of conversation several times, I enjoyed the delight and satisfaction of finding myself once more by the faithful animal's side.

However, I still had the stream to cross, and the tree that lay over it was much too narrow to admit a horse with safety. Having looked

around in all directions, without perceiving any possibility of passing without plunging into the water, I seated myself on a log that I might consider what was to be done. In a little time I observed a light twinkling in the woods upon the opposite side. I called loudly, again and again, and at last a tall figure appeared at a distance, as if reconnoitring, which proved to be an Indian. When he advanced, I rejoiced to find, by his salutation, that he understood English; and no sooner had I explained the nature of my difficulties, than he cried, "Stop, my friend, be patient, I will assist you." He accordingly began to cut away, with his tomahawk, the ice that projected from the edges of the stream; and having done this on both sides, he told me there was no depth of water, and I of course immediately forded the creek.

Perceiving that I was cold, he hospitably conducted me to his wigwam, which stood contiguous to the road, and was rendered comfortable by a blazing fire in front. In the interior I found a woman making leggings, and ornamenting them in the Indian style. At the request of her husband I seated myself beside her, and entered into conversation with him, in the course of which he gave me a great deal of information respecting himself, and I gratified him by being equally communicative. The Indian wigwam,

or camp, is constructed chiefly of bark, and is open in front, that its inmates may sit or lie with their feet to the fire. I found this one extremely comfortable, except when the wind blew the smoke in my face; and I believe I would have requested permission of its owners to pass the night with them, had not a regard for my horse induced me to proceed to the half-way house.

When I had become sufficiently warm, I mounted my horse, having still six miles to ride; but the moon now shone brightly, and the road became much better, so that I soon reached Ward's tavern, which is twenty-four miles distant from any house on the one side, and fifteen on the other. It was indeed delightful to experience the comforts of a cheerful fire and a good meal, and to enjoy the attendance of human beings, after a long and dreary day's journey in the tenantless wilderness. A person may, from choice, live weeks without seeing any of his species, and still feel indifferent about meeting with them; but he who is placed, even for a few hours, out of the reach and assistance of man, will anxiously wish for his society, and hail his presence with delight. Mr Ward, who keeps the tavern in the Long Woods, is very attentive to his guests, any one of whom may obtain an *extra* portion of civility merely by being communicative. He has a book, in which

he requests all travellers to write their names, places of abode, and destinations, and likewise to add any remarks that their journey through the Long Woods may have suggested. Comparatively few persons have as yet enrolled themselves in this book, and the majority of these were apparently somewhat puzzled when they attempted to comply with the first requisition—that of simply writing their own names. The only interesting memorandum that I could discover, was one which deponed that the writer of it had been attacked by the cholic while in the Long Woods, and that, on reaching Mr Ward's, he had taken some chicken soup, which, by the help of God, had much relieved him!

When it was midnight, I walked out, and strolled in the woods contiguous to the house. A glorious moon had now ascended to the summit of the arch of heaven, and poured a perpendicular flood of light upon the silent world below. The starry hosts sparkled brightly when they emerged above the horizon, but gradually faded into twinkling points as they rose in the sky. The motionless trees stretched their majestic boughs towards a cloudless firmament, and the rustling of a withered leaf, or the distant howl of the wolf, alone broke upon my ear. I was suddenly roused from a delicious reverie, by observing a dark object moving slowly and cau-

tiously among the trees. At first, I fancied it was a bear, but a nearer inspection discovered an Indian on all fours. For a moment I felt unwilling to throw myself in his way, lest he should be meditating some sinister design against me; however, on his waving his hand, and putting his finger on his lips, I approached him, and, notwithstanding his injunction to silence, inquired what he did there. "Me watch to see the deer kneel," replied he; "This is Christmas night, and all the deer fall upon their knees to the Great Spirit, and look up." The solemnity of the scene, and the grandeur of the idea, alike contributed to fill me with awe. It was affecting to find traces of the Christian faith existing in such a place, even in the form of such a tradition.

Next morning I left Ward's, and having passed through fifteen miles of forest, came again to the banks of the river Thames, and found myself in a populous settlement. The course of the Thames is beautiful and meandering; its waters are delightfully transparent; and it can be navigated by large vessels thirty miles above its mouth. It is above forty-five leagues in length, has a moderate current, and is, on an average, about eight hundred feet in breadth. It is plentifully stocked with excellent fish, and the lands that lie contiguous to its banks are, generally speaking, of the finest quality. Both sides of the river have been

settled, and under cultivation, during more than thirty years; however, the uninquiring traveller would suppose that they had but recently known the presence of man. There is indeed a good deal of cleared land on some of the farms; but miserable log-huts, ill-ploughed fields, shackling barns, and unpruned orchards, are to be seen every where, disfiguring the face of the country, and shewing too accurately the character of those who inhabit it. This settlement, I was informed, had undergone little change or advance within the last ten years, and, consequently, it has reached the highest pitch of improvement it will probably ever attain while in the hands of its present occupants. The Canadians, in addition to their indolence, ignorance, and want of ambition, are very bad farmers. They have no idea of the saving of labour that results from forcing land, by means of high cultivation, to yield the largest possible quantity of produce. Their object is, to have a great deal of land under *improvement*, as they call it; and, consequently, they go on cutting down the woods on their lots, and regularly transferring the crops to the soil last cleared, until they think they have sufficiently extended the bounds of their farms. They then sow different parts of their lands promiscuously, without any attention to nicety in the tillage, or any regard to rotation of crops.

There is hardly a clean or a well-ploughed field in the western part of the Province; nor has any single acre there, I believe, ever yielded nearly as much produce as it might be made to do under proper management.

At one of the houses where I stopped to feed my horse, they showed me a specimen of mineral oil, that is found in considerable quantities upon the surface of the Thames. It flows from an aperture in the bank of the river, and three or four pints can be skimmed off the water daily. It very much resembles pretoleum, being of thick consistence and black colour, and having a strong penetrating odour. The people employ it medicinally; and I was told, that its external application proved highly beneficial in cases of cramp, rheumatism, and other complaints of a similar kind.

In this house there was a woman afflicted with acute rheumatism. She had tried the mineral oil without receiving any benefit from it, and consequently had been induced to put herself into the hands of one of the doctors of the settlement. This gentleman happened to make his daily visit when I was present, and entered the room, carrying a pair of large saddle-bags, in which phials and gallipots were heard clattering against each other in a most formidable manner. He did not deign to take off his hat, but

advanced to his patient, and shook hands, saying, "How d'ye do, my good lady, how d'ye do?"—"Oh, doctor," cried the patient, "I was wishing to see you—very bad—I don't calculate upon ever getting *smart* again."—"Hoity, toity," returned the doctor, "you look a thundering sight better than you did yesterday."—"Better!" exclaimed the sick woman, "no, doctor, I am no better—I'm going to die in your hands."—"My dear good lady," cried the doctor, "I'll bet a pint of spirits I'll *raise* you in five days, and make you so *spry*, that you'll dance upon this floor."—"Oh," said the woman, "if I had but the *root* doctor that used to attend our family at Connecticut; he was a dreadful *skeelful* man." Here they were interrupted by the entrance of her husband, who was a clumsy, credulous-looking person. "Good morning to you, doctor," said he, "what's the word?"—"Nothing new or strange, sir," returned the doctor. "Well now, doctor," continued the husband, "how do you find that there woman?—no better, I conclude?—I guess as how it would be as well to let you understand plainly, that if you can't do her never no good, I wouldn't wish to be run into no expenses—pretty low times, doctor—money's out of the question. Now, sir, can *you* raise that there woman?"—"Yes, my good sir,"

cried the doctor confidently, "yes I can—I offered to bet a pint with her this moment, and I'll make it a quart if you please, my dear friend."—"But, doctor, are you up to the *natur* of her ailment?" inquired the husband. "Oh, perfectly," said the other, "nothing more simple; it arises entirely from obstruction and constitutional idiosyncrasy, and is seated under the muscular fascia. Some casual excitement has increased the action of the absorbent vessels so much, that they have drawn the blood from the different parts of the body, and occasioned the pain and debility that is now present."—"Well now, doctor," cried the husband, "I swear you talk like a lawyer, and I begin to have hopes that you'll be pretty considerably apt to raise my woman." The doctor now opened his saddle-bags, and, having set forth many small parcels and dirty phials upon the table, began to compound several *recipes* for his patient, who, when she saw him employed in this way, put out her head between the curtains of the bed, and cried, "Doctor, don't forget to leave something for the debilitation." When he had finished, he packed up his laboratory, and ordered that something he had left should be infused in a pint of whisky, and that a table-spoonful of the fluid should be taken three times a day.—

"Will that raise me *slick* ?"* said the woman; "I guess I had as well take it four times a day." As the doctor was mounting his horse, I heard the farmer say, "Doctor, don't be afeard about your pay, I'll see you satisfied; money, you know's, out of the question, but I've plenty of good buck-wheat."

About twelve miles above the mouth of the Thames I passed a spot called the town of Chatham. It contains only one house and a sort of church; but a portion of the land there has been surveyed into building-lots, and these being now offered for sale, have given the place a claim to the appellation of a town. There are many towns like Chatham in Upper Canada, and almost all of them have originated from the speculations of scheming individuals. When a man wishes to dispose of a piece of land, or to render one part of his property valuable by bringing settlers upon the other, he surveys a few acres into building-lots. These he advertises for sale at a high price, and people immediately feel anxious to purchase them, conceiving that their situation must be very eligible indeed, otherwise they would not have been selected for the site of a town. The extravagant hopes and expectations that often fill the minds of speculators such

* Soon.

as I allude to, would make the most enthusiastic castle-builder smile. Often, while surveying these *embryo* towns, have I been shewn particular spots of ground that were to be reserved for universities, hospitals, churches, &c. although not even a hovel had yet been erected within the precincts of the anticipated city. All these chimeras and erroneous conceptions have been introduced by people from the United States. There, villages and towns start into existence almost instantaneously; and when any place is peculiarly calculated by nature to be a theatre for the energies, enterprise, and associated labours of man, it is immediately occupied by an active and industrious population, and soon attains that degree of importance to which its advantages entitle it. But in Upper Canada things are very different; for the Province at present affords so few excitements to individual exertion, and such unpromising prospects, that all plans to promote its aggrandisement and prosperity, whether rational or chimerical, are alike doomed to languish for want of supporters.

The river Thames discharges itself by a wide mouth into Lake St Clair, the sides of which are still uncultivated, there being only a few straggling houses upon them. Lake St Clair forms an intermediate body of water between Lakes Huron and Erie. It has nothing at all singular

or interesting about it, and is nearly of a circular shape, being thirty miles wide, and ninety in circumference.

The Detroit river, which connects Lake St Clair and Lake Erie, is forty miles long, and divides that part of Canada which it traverses, from the United States. Its banks are in many places thickly peopled, and in a high state of cultivation, and on the British side the settlement is entirely confined to them. The inhabitants here are chiefly French Canadians, who began to occupy the country when Canada was still under the jurisdiction of France. They still retain that amenity of manners which distinguishes them from the peasantry of most countries; and this quality appears to particular advantage, when contrasted with the rudeness and barbarism of the *boors* who people the other parts of the Province. The houses are so numerous and so close together upon the banks of the Detroit river, that there is the appearance of a succession of villages for more than ten miles. The farms are very narrow in front, and extend a great way back. The lots were laid out in this awkward and inconvenient form, that their respective occupants might be able to render one another assistance when attacked by the Indians, who were at one time very numerous and troublesome in this part of the country.

The banks of the Detroit river are the Eden of Upper Canada, in so far as regards the production of fruit. Apples, pears, plums, peaches, grapes, and nectarines, attain the highest degree of perfection there, and exceed in size, beauty, and flavour, those raised in any other part of the Province. Cider abounds at the table of the meanest peasant, and there is scarcely a farm that has not a fruitful orchard attached to it. This fineness of the fruit is one consequence of the amelioration of climate, which takes place in the vicinity of the Detroit river and Lake St Clair. The seasons there are much milder and more serene than they are a few hundred miles below, and the weather is likewise drier and less variable. Comparatively little snow falls during the winter, though the cold is often sufficiently intense to freeze over the Detroit river so strongly, that persons, horses, and even loaded sleighs, cross it with ease and safety. In summer the country presents a forest of blossoms, which exhale the most delicious odours; a cloud seldom obscures the sky; while the lakes and rivers, which extend in every direction, communicate a reviving freshness to the air, and moderate the warmth of a dazzling sun; while the clearness and elasticity of the atmosphere render it equally healthy and exhilarating.

About twenty miles down the Detroit river

stands the village of Sandwich, which contains thirty or forty houses, and a neat church. Below this the soil becomes rather inferior in quality, being somewhat cold and swampy. The settlement is likewise partial and circumscribed, and a tract of land six miles in length, which belongs to the Huron Indians, does not contain a single inhabitant. A little above the mouth of the Detroit river, and head of Lake Erie, is the town of Amherstburgh, which forms the most westerly settlement in the Upper Province. The population of this place amounts to more than a thousand souls, a proportion of whom are merchants, who derive support in the way of trade from the farmers residing upon the shores of Lake Erie. Many of the inhabitants of Amherstburgh are persons of wealth and respectability, and the circle which they collectively compose is a more refined and agreeable one than is to be met with in any other village in the Province.

The mouth of the Detroit river, in which there are several islands, forms a safe and commodious harbour. The river itself is navigable for vessels of any size; and a chain of water-communication extends westward without interruption to the head of Lake Superior, which is more than a thousand miles distant from Lake Erie. The country north-west of Amherstburgh being

entirely uninhabited, except by tribes of wandering Indians, is but little known; however, it would appear that many parts of it are well adapted for agriculture. The land bordering upon the river St Clair, which forms the communication between Lakes Huron and Lake St Clair, is of excellent quality, and will soon be surveyed into townships, and given to actual settlers, under the usual restrictions. But the soil on the north side of Lake Huron is, generally speaking, rocky and unproductive; and the climate there bears little resemblance to that of the more easterly parts of Upper Canada, being cold, humid, and tempestuous; but the amelioration which would probably take place, were the forests cut down, might render this extensive tract of country more fertile, and more suitable for the residence of man, than it is at present. Lake Michigan does not lie within the British territories; and the shores of Lake Superior have been so partially explored, that it is difficult, and indeed useless, to ascertain whether or not they are calculated for settlement, and capable of supporting a large population.

He who has journeyed from the mouth of the river St Lawrence to Amherstburgh (a distance of fifteen hundred miles), will find the latter a magnificent and interesting point of observation. He will be irresistibly led to contrast the tract

of country he has traversed with those mighty regions that stretch towards the north-west—wild, boundless, and unexplored,—regions beside which Lower and Upper Canada, with all their improvements, dwindle into insignificance, and appear alone worthy of a transient regard. This wilderness contains within itself all those things which are primarily requisite for the foundation and prosperity of a great empire. Lakes and navigable rivers every where afford the means of internal commerce; while the wide-spreading forests will furnish materials for the construction of ships, which may hereafter traverse Lakes Huron and Superior, and ride in those bays and inlets which emboss their shores, and which are at present the resort only of water-fowl.

LETTER XIII.

Departure from Sandwich—Dangers of the bordage—Violent snow-storm—La Vallee's tavern—Company there—Evening's amusement—Scene on Lake St Clair—Effects of intoxication—Sleigh-riding on the ice—Dangers that attend it—Canadian skies—American economy—A new Catholic prohibition—Arnold's mills—Cottage there, and inmates—A walk in the woods—The upper part of the Talbot Settlement—Scarcity of money there—Amusing rencontre and conversation—Death-bed scene—Conclusion of the journey.

AFTER remaining ten days at Amherstburgh and Sandwich, I prepared to set out for the Talbot Settlement again. I had suffered so much from cold during my journey upwards, that I dreaded returning on horseback, and accordingly leaving my horse at the former town, secured a seat in a sleigh that was travelling towards my place of destination. The severity of the weather had frozen the Detroit river a few days after I reached Amherstburgh, but a thaw soon coming on, destroyed the ice so completely, that no part of it remained except a narrow strip along the shore, such as the Canadians call a *bordage*. The snow began to fall, for the first time that season, on the morning on which we left Sand-

wich; but the quantity upon the ground being too small to render the roads fit for a sleigh, we were obliged to travel upon the ice, much against our inclination, as it was very narrow and full of large cracks and holes.

The snow soon began to drift so much, that the driver could scarcely see which way the horses' heads were, and consequently was unable to avoid the various dangers that environed us. We trusted entirely to chance, and momentarily expected that we would be dragged over the brink of the ice and precipitated into the river, which was at least twelve or fifteen feet deep. At last a large rock stopped our progress. The space between it and the high bank of the river was too narrow to admit the passage of a sleigh, and the ice beyond it did not appear to be strong enough to bear us. As the storm continued to increase, we now resolved to abandon the *bordage* altogether, and to travel along the highway, bare and unfit for a sleigh as it was. We gained the road with much difficulty, and immediately getting out of the sleigh, walked behind it, that we might relieve the horses.

I was not long able to keep up with my fellow-travellers, and soon lost sight of them. The wind blew violently and irregularly, and sometimes raising up large quantities of the dry snow that had fallen, whirled it aloft in clouds

that enveloped every thing in a murky obscurity. In some places the road was so bare that the dust could be seen; and in others, immense drifts several feet deep lay across it, and concealed the track. I twice found myself on the edge of the steep bank of the river, and at another time discovered that I had struck across a field, and was retracing my steps to Sandwich. I unconsciously passed several houses in which I would gladly have taken shelter, but the showers of snow that loaded the air prevented me from seeing them. I did not meet with a single human being, except one man, who, notwithstanding the badness of the ice, and the tempestuous weather, was driving furiously along the *bordage* in a one-horse sleigh. When viewed through the changing and hazy medium of the snow-drifts, he and the animal that preceded him appeared to be of gigantic size, and to move forwards with superhuman velocity. I watched their progress for a time, but they soon disappeared amidst the mazes of the drifting storm.

My fellow-travellers had informed me before we parted, that they intended to stop at a tavern on Lake St Clair. Fearing lest the weather should grow worse, I did not allow myself to rest until I reached the house and joined them, after a walk of seven miles, and of more than four hours' duration. I felt inexpressibly fatigued, and en-

joyed the good fire to which I was conducted by the host, fully as much as I did that at Ward's tavern, after my journey through the Long Woods. At the same time I could not but reflect, that if the snow-storm, which I encountered while travelling there, had become as violent as the one I had just escaped from, I would inevitably have perished from cold and exhaustion.

The day following, being that on which the quarter sessions took place at Sandwich, the tavern was crowded with people who had been prevented from pursuing their journey thither by the violence of the storm. The public room contained a wonderful medley of persons. They were drinking, talking, smoking, swearing, and spitting promiscuously; and the melting of the snow, which they had brought into the apartment upon their shoes, had deluged the whole floor. As the scene was inexpressibly disagreeable, I requested the landlord to conduct me to another apartment. He willingly consented, and ushered me into a room where his wife and several other females sat at work. They were all Frenchwomen, and my limited powers of conversation in that language prevented me from addressing myself to any of them; but my hostess, nevertheless, seemed to understand my feelings, for she soon set about preparing supper, which

was particularly acceptable to me, as I had tasted nothing but snow since morning.

Shortly after the table equipage was removed, two girls entered the apartment, carrying a small tub of beautiful apples between them. They placed it in the midst of us, and every one partook liberally of the dessert which it contained; and I easily discovered, from the exquisite flavour of the apples, that they had been produced upon the banks of the Detroit river. The landlord, La Valleé, now entered with a French newspaper in his hand, and having seated himself among the seamstresses, began to read articles of foreign intelligence. His female auditors listened with undivided attention until he had got through a paragraph, and then they all broke silence at once, and commented with much prolixity upon what it contained. The noise of their tongues was so distracting, that, before La Valleé had finished one page of the newspaper, I began to suspect that I had not much improved my situation, by exchanging the bar-room for *Madame's* parlour.

About ten at night I went out to ascertain the state of the weather. It had ceased snowing, but the wind was still very high. The heavens were covered with large fleeces of broken clouds, and the stars flashed through them as

they were wildly hurried along by the blast. The frozen surface of Lake St Clair stretched in chill and dreary extent towards the horizon, and exhibited a motionless and unvaried expanse, except when a gust of wind whirled a wreath of snow into the air, and swept it forward in eddying columns. The leafless trees creaked and groaned under the blast, and the crashing of boughs, yielding to its violence, broke upon the ear at irregular intervals.

The scene, though sublime, created a shuddering sensation, so that I gladly returned to the house, and followed my host to the chamber in which I was to sleep. The French Canadians keep themselves extremely comfortable within doors, having a small stove in every room, and often a large one in the hall or entry. The taverns occupied by them are the best places of a similar description that a traveller can resort to during winter; for they will always afford him the luxury of a warm sleeping apartment, whatever be their deficiencies in other respects.

Fatigued as I was, I enjoyed but little sleep in consequence of the noise made by the troop of Bacchanals who caroused in the apartment immediately under mine, and continued their orgies during the whole night. Next morning the public room of the tavern presented a shocking spectacle; bottles, glasses, benches, and drunk

men, being scattered promiscuously upon the floor. All sorts of people are detestable when under the influence of ardent spirits, but the Americans particularly so. It is sometimes contended, that a slight degree of intoxication makes diffident and reserved persons more agreeable than they naturally are, by rendering them free and communicative; but the *mauvais honte* being totally unknown among the lower orders of the Americans, they do not require any *stimulus* to induce them to exhibit their powers and propensities. Therefore, the influence of liquor only serves to draw forth their natural coarseness, insolence, and rankness of feeling, and to make them as it were caricatures of themselves. Whoever wishes to attain a just conception of the enormity which the human character assumes when unchecked by restraint, unrefined by education, and unmodelled by dependence, should spend an hour in the bar-room of some low tavern in Upper Canada, when a party of common farmers are drinking together.

We set out immediately after breakfast, and drove along the ice upon Lake Clair, keeping near the side, however, lest any accident should happen. But there was in reality little to apprehend; for in many places, at least thirty yards from the shore, we saw that the ice rested on the bed of the Lake, every drop of water having

been literally frozen up. The cold was intense beyond what I had ever before experienced, and we felt its utmost severity, being exposed to a strong wind, which swept over many miles of ice before it reached us.

Lake St Clair seemed frozen as far as the eye could discern, and, I suppose, is frequently in this state the whole way across at the end of a severe winter, its depth not being very great, and its breadth only thirty miles. Even Lake Erie sometimes presents one continuous expanse of ice towards the horizon, which must be at least fifteen miles distant from the spectator, when he stands on the top of a bank nearly one hundred feet high. If there is a surface of ice to an equal extent on each side, which we may reasonably suppose to be the case, it is not difficult to believe that this Lake may sometimes be frozen over entirely, as the water is not more than one hundred feet deep in almost any part of it.

It is highly perilous for inexperienced persons to travel upon the ice, even during the most intense frost. Besides the cracks and flaws that are to be avoided, there are places called *air-holes*, which give way the moment a cariole is driven upon them; and when this takes place, the passengers often find great difficulty in saving their own lives, much more those of the horses. People who are in the habit of travelling much

upon the ice, usually carry halters with them, for the purpose of choking the horses, should an accident of this kind happen. The tightness of the rope closes the windpipe, and prevents the water from rushing into the lungs of the animal, while the air they contain renders its body so bouyant, that it floats upon the surface, and is easily dragged out. However, considerable judgment is required to ensure the successful execution of this plan, as people sometimes pull the noose so tight, that they literally hang the animal they expected to save from drowning.

A little before sunset, we reached the mouth of the river Thames, which was completely frozen over. A man informed us, that a sleigh had fallen through the ice the preceding night; however, we were obliged to continue our journey upon the *bordage*, the snow having drifted so much, that the roads were nearly impassable. I suffered great uneasiness lest the ice should give way; for it cracked incessantly under the cariole; but my fellow-travellers said, this proved that its strength might be depended upon. The night was cloudless and beautifully clear, and the stars gave so much light that I could have read a book without any difficulty. The skies in Canada, during winter, are peculiarly transparent and dazzling. The brilliancy of the different constellations, and the distinctness of

the galaxy, make a stranger almost believe he has been removed to a new hemisphere, and brought nearer to the heavens than he ever was before. Fine skies are generally supposed to have an influence upon the character of those who live under them; however, the inhabitants of Upper Canada cannot be produced as an evidence of the correctness of this prevalent opinion.

About nine o'clock we stopped for the night at a small tavern on the bank of the river; and I was delighted to get once more upon *terra firma*, beside a comfortable stove, notwithstanding my love of star-gazing. We were soon provided with supper, which proved better than the mean appearance of the house had led me to expect. One of my fellow-travellers declined sitting down at table, as he had a supply of provisions with him, but the other tried to persuade him to join in our repast. Upon this he began to walk thoughtfully about the room, and then threw himself along a bench, resting his head upon his hand with an air of abstraction for some minutes. At last he started up, and cried out, with an oath, that he would sup with us, and that he minded expense as little as any man! The lower orders of the Americans are extremely parsimonious in those things that regard their personal comfort. They never spend

money with a good grace, unless it be for the purpose of gratifying their vanity, or increasing their importance. They will pay for the liquor which their companions, or even total strangers, have drank at a tavern, that they may prove their wealth, and receive applause for their selfish generosity. Upon the same principle they will throw away large sums in the purchase of fine bridles or glittering watch-chains, and then endeavour to make up for such useless extravagance, by starving themselves and their horses for weeks together. But in general, they would rather want a meal than pay the expense of one, because the gratification of the cravings of vanity does not accompany or follow the relief of the cravings of hunger.

The woman who kept the tavern was a French Canadian, and had several daughters. Two of them remained in the room while we were at table: I overheard their conversation, which was carried on in a very desponding tone, and related to some restrictions that their Catholic priest had lately enforced with respect to dancing. It appeared from what they said, that balls had formerly been of frequent occurrence in the settlement; but that the priest, anxious about the spiritual welfare of his parishioners, had issued an order prohibiting the amusement altogether. However, notwithstanding this, dances occasion-

ally took place at private houses in a quiet way. The holy father, when informed that such was the case, determined to put down the evil in an effectual manner, and accordingly sent for the musicians, and told them, that if they continued to exercise their art at balls, they would forfeit every chance of happiness in the next world, and be the means of drawing many souls into the vortex of destruction. But fearing lest the profits of their occupation should tempt them to sin again, he promised to pay them out of his own pocket all the money they might lose by strictly adhering to his injunctions. He likewise denied the rites of the church to all persons who persisted in dancing. These prohibitory measures had thrown a gloom upon the spirits of half the young Canadians in the settlement; and the propriety of them was canvassed in a very sophistical manner by my hostess' two daughters.

Next morning we pursued our journey; and to my great satisfaction kept upon the high-road, the snow being now so well beaten, that a sleigh went forward very smoothly. On reaching a place called Arnold's Mills, my fellow-travellers informed me that circumstances had induced them to change their route, and that they could not carry me any nearer to my place of destination, and would therefore set me down at the

first house we came to. This intelligence was equally unpleasant and unexpected; but I found myself obliged to agree to what they proposed, and accordingly took leave of them at the gate of a cottage that stood near the road-side.

On entering the house, I was astonished to find its interior characterized by a neatness very uncommon in the dwellings of the peasantry of Upper Canada. Its inmates willingly consented to let me remain with them until I should find an opportunity of proceeding to the Talbot Settlement; so I accordingly seated myself at the fire, and began to look over a parcel of books that lay upon a table. Among them I found Mackenzie's Novels, Thomson's Seasons, Cowper's Poems, Persian Tales, and several works of a similar description, and likewise a Love Dictionary, the phraseology and definitions of which were better calculated for the meridian of Bond-street or St James' than for that of Upper Canada. All this evinced that a degree of refinement, not indigenous to the country, existed in some of the members of the family. After a little time a girl of interesting appearance entered the room, and having seated herself at the window, began to read with much attention. She had an air of languor and anxiety, and I remarked that the old woman who kept the house, al-

ways addressed her in a very respectful and affectionate manner.

I watched anxiously the whole day, in hopes of seeing some cariole that would convey me to Talbot Settlement, from the nearest part of which I was still seventeen miles distant. When it became dark I walked to the nearest farm-house, to inquire of its owner, if he knew by what means I could get forward to my place of destination. On my return back, and when within a few yards of the cottage, I heard footsteps behind me. I looked round, and saw a young man dresssed in a white gown, hurrying along the road. He soon made up with me, and having caught hold of my arm, stared wildly in my face, and uttered some unintelligible sounds. I was shocked at his appearance, and pushed him from me, when he ran off with a maniacal laugh. On reaching the cottage, I told the old woman what a disagreeable interruption I had met with in the course of my walk, and proceeded to describe the being whom I had encountered. She looked distressed, and cried, "I know him well, for he is my son. He never has been gifted with sense since he was born—but I don't love him the less for that." The young man entered the room soon after, and his mother began to caress him, and almost seemed to rejoice in his

idiotism. The exhibition of maternal tenderness and maniacal delight which ensued, was such a revolting spectacle, that I immediately left the apartment.

As there appeared to be no chance of any sleigh going towards the Talbot Settlement, I resolved to set out for it next morning on foot. This was rather an arduous undertaking. The road lay through seventeen miles of uninhabited forest; it was bad and but little frequented, which was the more unfortunate as I had to carry a portmanteau on my back. However, after taking a good breakfast, and receiving directions about my route, I began my journey. Just as I struck into the woods a man accosted me, and requested permission to bear me company, as he was going the same way. We found the snow very deep in the middle of the road, and not at all beat down, only two sleighs having passed since it had fallen. The roughness of the ground underneath rendered our walk inexpressibly tedious and fatiguing; however, my companion contrived to beguile the time, by telling stories of the murders that had been committed by the Indians, during the last American war, on the very road where we then travelled. About sunset, we heard the axes ringing in Talbot Settlement, and never was any sound more

delightful to my ears. However, I had still two miles more to walk before I reached the house where I intended to sleep, and I accomplished these with the utmost difficulty.

I thought my fatigues almost repaid by the pleasures of a good fire; and it was well I did so, for the house afforded scarcely any other comforts. Its inhabitants had recently come to the settlement, and were of course very poor. They presented me with bread, pork, and tea without sugar, and made a bed for me on the floor. There was, however, no appearance of wretchedness or despondency in the house, its owner and his wife being cheerful, and sanguine about what the future would produce. I have always observed, that the new settlers in Upper Canada are perfectly happy and contented in the midst of their severest hardships; and with reason, for a moment's observation must convince them that prosperity and abundance will, sooner or later, be the result of their labours and exertions.

Next morning, before commencing my journey, I wished to reward the hospitality of my entertainers, but they positively declined accepting any thing. The part of the settlement through which I now passed, having been recently peopled, had as yet undergone little cultivation or improvement; and the axe and hoe were the only agricultural utensils its inhabitants

had hitherto found it necessary to make use of. When one sees the disorder that prevails upon a newly-cleared farm, and estimates the quantity of labour which will be requisite to put things in a proper state, he feels astonished that its occupant is not disheartened at the number of objects which demand his industry and attention. However, it fortunately happens that all the inhabitants of a recent settlement have, in general, equal difficulties to contend with, and every one thus becomes satisfied with his lot, and is encouraged to exertion by perceiving that he is getting on as fast as his neighbours.

Having walked four miles, I stopped and breakfasted. While thus engaged, two collectors entered the house, and requested its owner to pay his taxes, which amounted to twelve or fourteen shillings. However, he told them he was unable to comply with their demands at present, as he had not the sum specified in his possession, but would endeavour to raise it immediately by disposing of some grain. I was rather astonished to discover such a scarcity of money in a settlement that was continually receiving an influx of emigrants, though I did not feel any surprise at a man in Upper Canada not being able to pay his assessment, trifling as it always is. In the Niagara district, which is the richest part of the Province, I have known farm-

ers, who possessed large quantities of produce and live stock, find it necessary to sell part of their property for half its real value, that they might be able to obtain enough of specie to answer the demands of the tax-gatherer. This scarcity of money induces many persons to give false returns, and government is, consequently, defrauded to a considerable amount every year; for the assessors are not very strict in the performance of their duty.

When I got up from the breakfast table, I found that I could scarcely stand. The severe straining of the muscles, which the depth of the snow and roughness of the roads had occasioned, was the cause of this debility. I requested my landlord to hire a horse for me if possible, and after some delay he procured one, and I again set out towards home. I had not proceeded far, when a mean-looking fellow, shabbily mounted, came up with me, and made some observation about the weather. I replied carelessly, and rode on in silence; but he still kept close by my side, and I at last spurred my horse into a trot, that I might get rid of him. He likewise quickened his pace, and then said, "Well now, *mister*, I vow that's just about as smart a thing to trot as ever I came across. Will you sell the *critur* ?"

"No, I cannot—he is not my own."

" Oh, as for that, it may be or it may not be; but I like the *critur* considerably, and should be glad if you would let me have him. If you'll make a trade, I'll give you a good boot. I would willingly give this excellent English watch, which is as good as cash, and the thing I now ride, in exchange for your *critur;* by which means both of us would be satisfied."

" I have already told you that the animal does not belong to me."

" Well, *now*, I guess he don't; but when you first said so, I concluded you was only running me, to see how high I would come up. Well, mister, I see as how we can't make a trade—God Almighty never intended that *critur* for me—I suppose you've been up the Lake—was you at the Rondeau?"

" No, I did not pass that way."

" Well, I've just been in that part; for I had a notion of taking a lot there, and coming on it in the spring—but I'm off that plan now, for I'll be damned if there's any land or country up there at all."

" How can that be?"

" Why, because it's all covered with water—I would rather swing the axe for a whole year in the back woods of Kentucky, than make my pitch any where in this here Canada—but, *mis-*

ter, you don't seem to say much—we States people complain that you old country folks, when you fall in with a *gentleman* on the road, don't behave as clever and free to him as you might."

"And the old country people complain that you Americans behave too free—good morning."

While stopping to feed my horse, I was forced, by particular circumstances, to witness a distressing scene which took place at a farm-house. Its inmates consisted of a family who had recently emigrated from Scotland, and the mother was dying in childbed. Supported by pillows, she reclined on a mattress in the middle of the floor, but had become nearly speechless. The eldest daughter knelt behind the couch, and tried to conceal her tears by pulling her hair over her eyes, but loud and frequent sobs rendered her anguish too apparent. The husband walked hurriedly about the room in silent grief, and his countenance shewed that his sorrow was darkened by the disconsolate feeling of being in a foreign country. I am confident he felt, at the moment, that he could have borne his affliction better had it assailed him while he was in his native land; all the associations connected with which were undoubtedly recalled by the pre-

sence of a son who had only arrived the preceding day. This young man had been left in Scotland by his parents, who were unwilling that he should venture to Canada, until they had ascertained what prospects the country offered to persons of his description. But whenever they got settled on their land, they wrote him, requesting that he would come out to them immediately. In consequence of this, he set sail for America, and just reached his father's house in time to witness the death of his mother. He looked at her with an expression of wild astonishment, and seemed too much shocked and bewildered to understand the nature of his situation. It was a gloomy winter day, but the fire had been allowed to go nearly out—the furniture of the room lay in confusion over the floor —several half-dressed children scrambled upon the hearth—and every thing was characteristic of a house of mourning and a chamber of death. The afflicted group brought to my recollection the death-bed scene I had witnessed on the shore of Lake Erie; and I could not help contrasting the meekness, resignation, and unobtrusive sorrow now displayed by the Scottish peasants, with the heartless and noisy grief which the Canadians had exhibited on a similar occasion.

After a little time I left the farm-house and pursued my journey. The road was so bad and hilly, that I did not travel much faster than I could have done had I been on foot, and in possession of my natural pedestrian powers. However, I reached Port Talbot that evening, and next day arrived at my place of residence.

I have now, my dear friend, conducted you from one extremity of the Province to the other, and detailed almost every thing important or interesting that fell under my observation. The traveller cannot expect to meet with much variety in a country that is but recently peopled. The impenetrable forest, the hovels of a rising settlement, the dreary swamp, and the wandering Indian, alone diversify a large part of Upper Canada, and produce few entertaining adventures, or few impressions worthy of record. He who takes a general survey of Upper Canada will, indeed, find abundant room for interesting speculation, whether he considers the physical improvements of which the country is eminently susceptible, or anticipates the grandeur and importance it must eventually attain; but it would be vain and useless to indulge in views of this kind, until the prosperity of the Province is established upon more sure foundations than it is at present, and an increase of wealth and po-

pulation secures to it the means of carrying into effect those plans and arrangements that would elicit its capabilities, render it flourishing, and make it, in some degree, beneficial to the parent state.

LETTER XIV.

Climate of Upper Canada—Winter—Sleigh-riding—Degree of cold—Spring—Summer—Autumn—Indian summer—Improvement of climate from cultivation—Wild fruits—Soil and productions—Price of lands—Expense of clearing them—Rate of labour—Prices of grain and cattle—Taxes—Scarcity of money—Manner of paying labourers—Different classes of emigrants—Peasants and mechanics—Advantages Upper Canada affords them—What descriptions of them succeed best—Directions about embarkation—Expense of the voyage to Quebec—Plan to be pursued on arriving there—Manner of travelling up the country—Steps to be taken at York—Terms upon which government grants lands—Fees upon grants—Where the emigrant should choose his lands—Things to be attended to in selecting a lot—Plan to be followed by poor emigrants—Different modes of settling—Their comparative advantages—Importance of arriving early in the season—Manner of building a house, and expense—Stock necessary for a new settler—Provisions, and expense of them—Art of chopping soon acquired—Different modes of clearing land—Expense paid by the first crop—Profits of the second—Barn to be erected—Garden to be made—Manner in which settlers assist each other—Their mutual advantages—Different ways of disposing of surplus produce—Occupations during winter—Hauling firewood—Shooting—Mode of life—Articles of diet—Substantial comforts—Advantage of emigrating to Upper Canada—Proofs of this—Fineness of the country—Second class of emigrants—Inducements that the Province offers

them—Objections and inconveniences—Emigrants possessing capital—Different ways of employing it—Profits of speculations in land.

I HAVE now concluded the narrative of my wanderings; but a few subjects connected with the Province still remain to be considered; and these will prove both important and interesting to persons who have any intention of emigrating to Upper Canada.

The nature of the climate is a consideration of the greatest consequence to all those who propose to remove to a foreign country, and deservedly so; for a malignant atmosphere exerts an influence over the mind and body which it is impossible to evade. But he who takes up his residence in Upper Canada runs no risk of suffering in this way. The climate, in the westerly parts of the Province particularly, is alike healthful and agreeable. In winter, the thermometer occasionally stands several degrees below *zero;* but this intense cold seldom continues more than three or four days at a time, and is by no means unpleasant. The temperature, during January and February, may, in the generality of seasons, average 15° Fahrenheit. The snow usually lies six or seven weeks, but the time, of course, varies according to the quantity that falls. While it remains upon the ground, the carriage called a *sleigh* or *cariole* (which is too generally known

to require description), is exclusively used, and forms a delightful mode of conveyance, one pair of horses being able to draw several persons sixty or seventy miles in the course of a day, without much fatigue. Often, for some weeks in winter, the sky continues bright and cloudless, and though the air is intensely keen, yet its bracing and exhilarating effects enable one to bear the cold without any inconvenience. At these times the public roads are crowded with sleighs; and the farmer conveying his produce to market, the wood-cutter hauling wood, the quack doctor, the merchant driving for pleasure, and the jogging traveller, all meet the eye in varying succession.

When the winter is moderate and steady, with plenty of snow, it is the most agreeable season in the year; however, it is sometimes subject to vicissitudes which render it the most unpleasant. I have seen storms of thunder and lightning in the month of February, the thermometer having stood at *zero* only a few days before; and have also known hail, rain, and snow occur successively in the course of half an hour. The changes of temperature are sometimes inconceivably sudden and extraordinary; but they affect the Canadians very slightly; for they are always prepared for them, and their constitutions are not so *barometrical* as those of English people. The winter season is extremely healthy,

sickness of any description being almost unknown either among the natives or foreigners.

Spring commences in March; but the early part of this season is seldom agreeable, being damp, tempestuous, and rainy, and occasionally very cold. The roads likewise become so bad, that it is hardly possible to go out of doors.—Towards the end of April the ground becomes dry, vegetation commences, and the fields afford a little pasture to the cattle. In May the earth is covered with verdure; and if the weather is genial and warm, the buds of the trees expand with astonishing rapidity, while the forests exhibit an innumerable variety of hues, all resplendently bright and exquisitely pure.

In June, the orchards are in full blow, and a transparent atmosphere and cloudless sky prevail from the rising to the setting of the sun. During July and August, however, the heat becomes so intense, that it is unpleasant to leave the house, or take the least exercise; and musquetoes abound wherever there are woods, which prove a torment to those who are exposed to their attacks. The heat in the course of the summer has several times been found to exceed 100° Fahrenheit in the shade, but it usually averages from 82° to 90°.

The autumns of Upper Canada very much resemble those of Britain. October is usually a

delightful dry month, with mild days and clear frosty nights. The early part of November is generally characterized by a peculiar state of the weather, which the Canadians term *Indian summer*. The atmosphere has a haziness and smokiness which makes distant objects appear indistinct and undefined, and a halo often encircles the sun. At the same time, a genial warmth prevails, and there is seldom any wind. The Indian summer is so delightful, that one would almost suppose the country where it takes place to be transported for a season to some celestial clime, where the elements ever existed in harmony and acted in unison. It is extremely difficult to explain the cause of the regular occurrence of this kind of weather; for scarcely a year passes, in the autumn of which there are not some days of Indian summer. It derives its name from the vulgar and prevailing notion, that the haziness of the weather is produced by the smoke which arises from the burning of the long grass, that covers the immense prairies bordering on the Missouri and Mississippi. It is true, that these prairies are annually set on fire by the Indians; but that the conflagration affects the climate and atmosphere of Canada is an idea too absurd to require refutation.

The climate of Upper Canada has not yet attained that salubrity and purity which will

eventually characterize it. Thick forests cover nine-tenths of the inhabited parts of the Province, and these, by preventing the evaporation of water from the surface of the earth, produce marshes, swamps, and collections of water which, in their turn, generate mists, chilly winds, and agues. When the woods are cleared away, the air, although perhaps colder, will be even more dry than it is at present. The lakes will then attract the clouds towards their surface, and Upper Canada will seldom be exposed to heavy falls of rain, or violent storms of snow.

I have already mentioned, that the soil and climate of the Province are very favourable to the growth of fruit. The cultivation of orchards, however, has hitherto been almost entirely neglected. The kinds of fruit most common in the country are not well chosen, and they appear to degenerate from want of care and attention. Wild grapes grow abundantly in the forests, and would, I believe, by proper culture, become equal in size and flavour to the garden grape, and also fit for making wine. Hickory nuts, walnuts, butter-nuts, plums, wild strawberries, cranberries, &c. are found in profusion almost every where, and might all, of course, be improved in value and quality by suitable cultivation.

The soil of Upper Canada is in general excel-

lent, and likewise of easy cultivation. Wheat is the grain that is raised in greatest quantity. A bushel and a half of seed are generally allowed for an acre, and the return averages from twenty-five to thirty-five bushels. Buck-wheat is also cultivated to a considerable extent, and an acre yields about fifteen bushels. Rye succeeds well, the crop being generally twenty bushels an acre. Oats are very indifferent, and much inferior to those raised in Europe, being small and light in the grain, and comparatively not nutritious. An acre yields on an average from thirty to forty bushels. Barley is but little known in Upper Canada; however, it would appear that the seasons are rather too warm and dry to be favourable to its growth. Indian corn is much cultivated in the western parts of the Province, and yields largely, if it is not injured or destroyed by late frosts. Potatoes succeed well in most soils, but are much inferior in quality to those produced in Britain. Turnips also form a profitable crop, and are used to feed live stock during winter; but the vegetable best adapted for this purpose is the squash or gourd, which affords an abundant crop, is much liked by the cattle, and never communicates any unpleasant flavour to the milk of the cows, as turnips invariably do.

But while examining this general estimate of the returns made by different crops, it must be

recollected, that in Upper Canada the land is scarcely ever made to produce nearly as much as it would do, were it under judicious cultivation. The Canadian farmers have no system in their agricultural operations, or in the management of their lands, and they prepare the soil for the reception of the seed very imperfectly. These circumstances are generally the result of ignorance, but often arise from a want of capital, and a difficulty of procuring labourers to assist them in the business of the farm. Were an enlightened English farmer to subject a portion of the best lands in Upper Canada to the British system of agriculture, making of course those deviations which the climate, soil, and other circumstances might render necessary, he would raise crops infinitely superior, alike in quantity and quality, to those that are generally yielded at present throughout the Province.

In Upper Canada, waste land varies in value according to its situation. Near villages, and populous parts of the country, its price is from £4 to £8 an acre; however, when it lies remote from any settlement, and has no particular local advantages, it may sometimes be purchased in tracts at the rate of two or three shillings an acre. Cultivated land sells much higher, particularly when bought in small quantities, its price being then sometimes £20 or £30 per acre.

A farm containing two hundred acres, thirty of which are under cultivation, and a log-house and barn, may be purchased for £250 in the Talbot Settlement, where the majority of British emigrants now take up their residence. A farm of similar extent, situated any where upon the frontier, between Niagara village and Fort Erie, could not be bought for less than eight or nine hundred pounds. In the back settlements, farms are always for sale at prices much lower than any I have mentioned; but the disadvantages incidental to their situation render them not very desirable for any person. In many of the villages of Upper Canada, lots containing half an acre sell for £50 or £60, and the lands in their immediate vicinity often bear a proportionably high value.

Waste land may be completely cleared and fenced at the rate of £4 per acre; however, if the quantity is large, and the work contracted for, the cost will not be so great. Farm-labourers, if hired by the day, receive from three shillings to four and sixpence, exclusive of board. A man's wages are £3 per month, besides board; but if he is hired by the year, he receives less in proportion. Women servants can hardly be procured, and they generally receive eighteen shillings or a guinea a month. A moderately good horse costs £20 or £25; a yoke of oxen the

same sum; a good cow from £5 to £7; a sheep 4s. 6d.; a large sow £2; and other domestic animals in proportion. Wheat averages 4s. 6d. a bushel; rye 4s.; oats 1s. 10d.; buck-wheat 3s.; Indian corn 3s.; potatoes 2s.; apples 2s. 6d.; hay, per ton, £2. When farms are rented, it is generally upon shares. The tenant is furnished with horses, oxen, and agricultural utensils by the owner, who receives one-third or one-half of the whole produce, as may have been agreed upon. This system is tolerably equitable, it being for the interest of both parties that as much land as possible should be laid down in crop.

In Upper Canada, the taxes are so trifling that they scarcely deserve notice. All rateable property, such as live-stock, houses, &c. is subject to a tax of one penny upon the pound, *ad valorem*. Cultivated land pays one penny an acre, and waste land one farthing. Every male is obliged to work three days annually upon the public roads, or employ a substitute, or pay the sum of thirteen shillings and sixpence to the path-master, being the wages of a labouring man for three days. Heads of families, and persons who keep teams, are liable to a greater proportion of statute labour. However, notwithstanding these regulations, the roads throughout the Province in general are in very bad repair, the path-masters not being sufficiently strict in exacting the ap-

portioned quantity of labour from each individual.

From what I have stated, it will be seen that the necessaries of life can be obtained at a small expense in Upper Canada; but that labour is very high, and quite out of proportion to most other things. This circumstance arises from the scarcity of labourers, and from their wages being in a great measure *nominal*. Money is so difficult to procure, that almost all the farmers are obliged to pay those they hire with grain of some kind, which being unsaleable, those who receive it are obliged to barter it away with loss for any thing else they may require. He who has a little money at command in Upper Canada will possess many advantages. He will get his work done at a cheaper rate than other people who have none; and, in making purchases, will often obtain a large discount from the seller. A third cause of the high wages of labourers is the exorbitant rate at which all merchandize of British manufacture is sold in Upper Canada, the retail prices of such being, on an average, one hundred and fifty per cent. higher than they are in Britain. The different articles of wearing apparel cost nearly twice as much as they do on the other side of the Atlantic, and are of very inferior quality.

The persons who may be inclined to emigrate

to Upper Canada are of three different descriptions, viz. the poor peasant or day-labourer; the man of small income and increasing family; the man possessing some capital, and wishing to employ it to advantage.

Persons of the first class never would repent if they emigrated to Upper Canada, for they could hardly fail to improve their circumstances and condition. I have already mentioned the inducements when describing the Talbot Settlement, and I repeat, that the poorest individual, if he acts prudently and is industrious, and has a common share of good fortune, will be able to acquire an independence in the space of four or five years. He will then have plenty to eat and drink, a warm house to reside in, and no taxes to pay; and this state of things surely forms a delightful contrast with those hardships and privations which are at present the lot of the labouring population of Great Britain.

It is evident that some descriptions of emigrants will succeed better in Upper Canada than others. Those who have been accustomed to a country life, and to country labour, are, of course, more fitted to cultivate land, and endure the hardships at first attendant upon a residence in the woods, than artisans or manufacturers, whose constitutions and habits of life are somewhat unfavourable to the successful pursuit of agriculture.

But every individual who, to youth and health, joins perseverance and industry, will eventually prosper. Mechanics cannot fail to do well in Upper Canada; for, when not employed in clearing lands, they will find it easy to gain a little money by working at their professions; and they likewise have the advantage of being able to improve their dwelling-houses and repair their farming utensils, at no expense. Weavers, being ignorant of country affairs, and unaccustomed to bodily exertion, make but indifferent settlers at first, and their trade is of no use to them whatever in the woods. Married persons are always more comfortable, and succeed sooner, in Canada, than single men; for a wife and family, so far from being a burden there, always prove sources of wealth. The wife of a new settler has many domestic duties to perform; and children, if at all grown up, are useful in various ways.

Emigrants ought to embark in vessels bound for Quebec or Montreal. If they sail for New York, they will have to pay a duty of 30 per cent. upon their luggage when they arrive at that port; and, as there is very little water-carriage between it and Canada, the route will prove a most expensive one, particularly to people who carry many articles along with them. Those who have money to spare, should lay in a quan-

tity of wearing apparel before leaving this country, as all articles of the kind cost very high in Upper Canada. A stock of broad-cloth, cotton, shoes, bedding, &c. can be carried out at a trifling expense, and will prove advantageous to the settler. But no one should take household furniture with him; and if he cannot sell what he has in this country, he ought to leave it behind him. The conveyance of tables, chairs, &c. into the back-woods costs far more than their value; besides every thing that is necessary for the interior of a log-hut can be procured in the settlements. Good furniture is not at all fit for the rude abodes that must at first be occupied by those who have newly emigrated.

A passage to Quebec or Montreal can now be procured for about £. 7, provisions included. Half-price is usually paid for children. Nothing is charged for luggage, unless the quantity is very great. Those emigrants who have but a small sum of money should convert it into guineas or dollars, British bank-notes and silver not being current in Canada. If the amount is large, it should be lodged in the hands of a friend in this country, and such arrangements made as will enable its owner to obtain the sum he wants, by drawing a bill upon his correspondent at home.

There are offices, both at Quebec and Montreal, where persons, by paying a small fee, may

obtain some information about vacant lands, the expense of a grant, and the means of proceeding to the Upper Province. Emigrants should go to these whenever they get on shore, and make such inquiries as they may think necessary, and then immediately set out for York. It is highly injudicious to waste any time in Quebec or Montreal, as living is very expensive in both cities, and as nothing but general information can be obtained in them, the people knowing as little about the exact nature of the different lots of land that are open to settlers, as we do in this country. Every man should see not only the settlement, but the farm which he proposes to select as his place of residence, before he comes to any decision; and, therefore, his object is to hasten up the country as fast as possible, York being the centre of all transactions connected with land business. Several steam-boats ply every day between Quebec and Montreal, and steerage passengers are charged 15s. On reaching Montreal, the emigrant should secure a place for himself and his luggage in the *batteaux*, which are open boats, that are rowed up the St Lawrence, and usually arrive at Kingston in six or seven days. Those who go by them must carry provisions for their own use. The whole expense will be about £1, 8s. for each person.

A steam-boat leaves Kingston once a week for York, and the steerage fare is 15s.

When the emigrant reaches York, he should go to the Land Office there, where he will be informed concerning the steps that must be taken, before he can be entitled to a grant. It is unnecessary to detail these farther than by stating, that the chief object of them is, to make the applicant prove himself a British subject.

Government gives fifty acres of land to any British subject, free of cost; but, if he wishes to have a larger quantity, he must pay fees to a certain amount. In Canada, fifty acres are considered as a very small farm, and, therefore the emigrant should procure at least twice as much, if he can afford to do so; however, he will not easily obtain more than one hundred acres, unless he proves himself possessed of the means of soon bringing a larger quantity under cultivation. All lands are bestowed under certain regulations and restrictions. The settler must clear five acres upon each hundred granted to him, open a road in front of his lot, and build a log-house of certain dimensions. These settling-duties, if performed within eighteen months after the location-ticket has been issued, entitle him to a deed from government, which makes the lot his for ever; and are so far from being severe or un-

reasonable, that he will find it necessary to perform them in less than the time specified, if he propose to obtain a subsistence from the cultivation of his farm. The following is a list of the fees on grants of land exceeding fifty acres:—

100 acres	£5	14	1
200	16	17	6
300	24	11	7
400	32	5	8
500	39	19	9
600	47	18	10
700	55	17	11
800	63	2	0
900	70	16	0
1000	78	10	2
1100	86	4	3
1200	93	18	4

The emigrant must now visit the settlement, or place, where he feels most inclined to take up his residence. Different persons will, of course, recommend different spots. But that tract of land which extends from the mouth of the Niagara river to the head of Lake Erie, combines a greater number of advantages than any other portion of the Province; and the emigrant will do well to choose his lot in some part of it. He may perhaps be told, that it lies too far from

a market; but this is quite a temporary defect, and is fully counterbalanced by the richness of soil, comparative lightness of timber, fine water communications, and superiority of climate, which characterize its whole extent. Ancaster, Long Point, Talbot Road, &c. are situated in this fertile region, which contains many other settlements equally beautiful and inviting.

Should the emigrant have a wife and family, he ought, if possible, to leave them at York; as it would be unnecessary, expensive, and inconvenient, for them to accompany him in his search, and as he must return to that place after he has chosen his location, that he may get it confirmed by government.

The people in new settlements are very willing to show the vacant land near them to strangers, from the desire they have of acquiring neighbours; and, therefore, the emigrant must ask some person to walk over the different lots with him, and point out their boundaries. The chief objects to be considered in making a selection are, the goodness of the land, its dryness, the existence of a spring of water upon it, its vicinity to a road, a navigable river, a mill, a running stream, a market, and an extensive and increasing neighbourhood. It is very seldom that a lot possessing all these advantages can be obtained, and the emigrant ought therefore

to fix upon the one that combines the most important of them. At all events, he must not choose barren or swampy land, whatever favourable circumstances may characterize its situation. Good roads, markets, a large neighbourhood, and mills, will make their appearance almost anywhere in the course of time; but a piece of poor wet ground will never produce enough to render them of any value to its possessor.

Whenever the emigrant has obtained from government a location-ticket, which is a sort of certificate that empowers him to take possession of the portion of land he has selected, he ought to commence operations immediately. But it sometimes happens, that emigrants are too poor to purchase the provisions, stock, and farming utensils that new settlers require, when commencing their labours. Persons so situated must hire themselves out, until they gain enough to make a beginning. They will be paid for their work in money, grain, cattle, or provisions; all which articles will prove equally useful and valuable to them. They will, at the same time, be acquiring a knowledge of the manners and customs of the country, the nature of the seasons, the mode of farming, and various other desirable particulars. The female part of the family may engage themselves as household servants, whose wages are always paid in money, and thus add a

good deal to the general stock. Many, who are now independent settlers, came to the Province in absolute poverty; but, by pursuing the plan above described, were soon enabled to commence working upon their own lands, and to raise themselves beyond the reach of want.

Some people choose to clear a few acres, and crop them, before they build a house, or go to reside upon their lots. Others erect a habitation first of all, and move into it at once with their families. The first plan is most congenial to the feelings of British emigrants; for the partial cultivation that has been effected, diminishes the wildness of the surrounding forests, and things are usually more comfortable and orderly within doors, than they can be when the settler takes up his residence on his land before any trees have been cut down. But the expense of supporting a family, while clearing operations are going forward, is great, unless the idle members engage themselves as servants; and the work, particularly if hired persons are employed, does not proceed so fast as it would do, were the principal residing upon his lot, and superintending the business himself. Therefore, all settlers who have little money ought to set themselves down in the woods at once, and boldly commence chopping. This plan may subject them to a few hardships, but it will assuredly be for their advantage in the end.

Much of the immediate success of a settler depends upon the time of his arrival in the country. Should he not reach Quebec till the autumn, winter will be almost commencing before he arrives at York, and the badness of the roads, and inclemency of the weather, will then make it difficult for him to travel to the new settlements, and survey the lands that are open for location. Even were he able to fix upon a lot, and build a house before winter set in, he could not clear any land till spring, on account of the deepness of the snow and severe cold; while he would all the time be at the expense of supporting himself and his family in idleness.—But if the emigrant reaches York in the month of July, he will find sufficient time to choose a good lot, erect a habitation, clear several acres of ground, and sow it with wheat or Indian corn, previous to the commencement of winter; thus getting the start, by a whole year, of him who arrives late in the autumn, and who would only be preparing his land for seed, when the other was reaping his first crop.

I shall now suppose that the emigrant has made all necessary arrangements for the occupation of his land. His first object then is to get a house built. If his lot lies in a settlement, his neighbours will assist him in doing this without being paid; but if far back in the woods, he must

hire people to work for him. The usual dimensions of a house are eighteen feet by sixteen. The roof is covered with bark or shingles, and the floor with rough hewn planks, the interstices between the logs that compose the walls being filled up with pieces of wood and clay. Stones are used for the back of the fire-place, and a hollow cone of coarse basket-work does the office of a chimney. The whole cost of a habitation of this kind will not exceed L.12, supposing the labourers had been paid for erecting it; but as almost every person can have much of the work done *gratis*, the expense will not perhaps amount to more than £5 or £6.

Whenever the house is completed, the emigrant ought to bring his family, cattle, provisions, and farming utensils, upon the lot. He should, if possible, have a couple of oxen, a cow, two pigs, a harrow, and an axe. The cost of the whole will be about L.28. But many settlers commence their labours without any cattle or implements at all, contriving to borrow what they want from their neighbours, and returning the obligation in work. If the emigrant's location lies in a settlement, he will find it advantageous to purchase his provisions there, particularly if there is much land-carriage between it and the nearest market. Flour and pork are the only articles of subsistence which can be conveniently

transported into the woods. The price of a barrel of flour, containing 186 lbs., is £1, 10; and of a barrel of pork, holding 200 lbs., about £5. It is easy to calculate how long a barrel of each article will support any given number of persons. A cow always proves a valuable animal to a new settler, her milk being convertible into many agreeable varieties of diet. He will find pigs a very profitable kind of stock, as they pick up abundant subsistence in the woods, require little attention, and multiply very fast.

The emigrant will use the axe rather awkwardly, and suffer a good deal of fatigue, when he first commences chopping. However, a few months' practice will render him tolerably expert. It is quite a mistake to suppose that a man never proves a good or successful settler, unless he has been accustomed from his infancy to cut down trees. The Americans and Canadians doubtless excel all other people in the use of the axe; but they do not work so steadily as Englishmen and Scotchmen, and seldom have much advantage over them in the end. This is daily exemplified in the new settlements of Upper Canada.

The clearing of land overgrown with timber is an operation so tedious and laborious, that different plans have been devised for abridging it, and for obtaining a crop from the ground before it is completed. The easiest and most economical

system is that named *Girdling*. The land is first cleared of brushwood and small timber, and then a ring of bark is cut from the lower part of every tree; and, if this is done in the autumn, the trees will be dead and destitute of foliage the ensuing spring; at which time the land is sown, without receiving any culture whatever except a little harrowing. This plan evidently possesses no advantage except that of enabling the settler to supply his immediate wants, at the expense of comparatively little time and labour. The crops obtained in this way are of course scanty, and of inferior quality. The dead trees must be cut down and removed at last; and being liable to fall during high winds, the lives of both labourers and cattle are endangered.

After the trees have been felled, the most suitable kinds are split into rails for fences, and the remainder, being cut into logs twelve feet long, are hauled together into large piles, and burnt. The land cleared in this manner is sown with wheat, and harrowed two or three times, and in general an abundant crop rewards the toils of the owner.

After the felling, dividing, and burning of the timber have been accomplished, the stumps still remain, disfiguring the fields, and impeding the effectual operation of the plough and harrow.

The immediate removal of the roots of the trees is impracticable, and they are therefore always allowed to fall into decay, to which state they are generally reduced in the space of eight or nine years. Pine stumps, however, seem scarcely susceptible of decomposition, as they frequently show no symptoms of it after half a century has elapsed.

Notwithstanding the quantity of labour necessary in clearing a piece of land, the first crop seldom fails to afford a return, more than sufficient to repay all that has been expended. The clearing, fencing, sowing, harrowing, and harvesting an acre of waste land will cost about £5, 5s. The produce is usually about twenty-five bushels of wheat, which on an average are worth £6. After the land has been in crop, its cultivation becomes much less expensive. The cost of putting in a second crop (ploughing being then necessary), will not exceed £2 per acre, while the produce will amount to perhaps thirty-five or forty bushels; thus affording a clear profit of from £4, 15s. to £6, 10s. after £1, 10s. has been deducted for harvesting and threshing.

In Upper Canada grain is always put under cover instead of being made into stacks; and therefore the farmer must build a barn, which at first is usually formed of logs, in the same way as a dwelling-house; however, it does not cost nearly so much, no inside work being

necessary. But when he becomes wealthier, and is more at leisure, he may erect a frame-barn, so called because it is constructed of joiner's work, and covered with boards. Such buildings are commonly made fifty feet long and forty wide, and cost about £60. The farmer ought to pay little attention to his dwelling-house, until he has provided a safe depository for his grain, and a warm shed to shelter his cattle. In Upper Canada, a miserable hovel is often seen in the midst of fruitful fields and fine orchards, forming a singular contrast with the handsome barn, which its owner has wisely spent his first gains in erecting.

When the emigrant has found himself comfortably established upon his lot, and surmounted his first difficulties, he ought to make a small kitchen-garden. This is a convenience which few Canadian farmers care to possess. They in general suppose that it requires a great deal of time and attention, but most erroneously; for the soil is so productive, that all useful vegetables grow without much culture. Every settler should likewise endeavour to raise a good stock of poultry. The first cost of them will be small, and the refuse from his barn will be sufficient to support any number he may require. They must be put into a house every night, otherwise the foxes will very soon carry them all away.

The emigrant will sometimes require assistance in the business of the farm, particularly if he has no family. Those whom he hires to work for him will generally be contented to receive two-thirds, or perhaps the whole, of their wages in grain. This makes payment very easy to the farmer, as the nominal value of his produce is usually equal to double the sum it has cost him to raise it; but if he has neighbours, he will often be able to get his work done without any direct outlay, it being customary for the inhabitants of a new settlement mutually to help each other, by accepting labour in return for labour. There is thus no outlay on either side, every one affording another a degree of assistance equal to what he has received from him. A man, perhaps, borrows a waggon for a day from his neighbour, and repays him by lending his oxen for an equal length of time. A new settlement is sometimes twenty or thirty miles distant from a mill, and the roads are generally so bad, that the person who carries grain to it waits till it is ground, although he should be detained several days. When this is the case, each individual, by turns, conveys to the mill the grain of three or four of his neighbours, and thus the great waste of labour, which would be occasioned were every one to take his own produce there separately, is avoided. From

these simple facts the advantage of living in a settlement must be very evident.

When the farmer is able to raise a larger quantity of produce than is required for the support of his family, there are several ways in which he may dispose of the surplus. In many new settlements the influx of emigrants is so great, as to produce a demand for grain more than equal to the supply. In Talbot Road, the average price of wheat has of late years been 4s. 6d. per bushel, while in most other parts of the country it was selling for 3s. and 3s. 6d.; shewing evidently, that the farmer will sometimes find the best market at his own door. But should there be no demand of this kind, he may carry his produce to the merchants. They will give him in exchange, broad-cloth, implements of husbandry, groceries, and every sort of article that is necessary for his family, and, perhaps, even money, at particular times. He will likewise often have it in his power to barter wheat for live stock of different kinds, and can hardly fail to increase his means, although without a regular market for his surplus produce, if he gets initiated into the system of traffic prevalent in the country.

In Upper Canada the winter is the farmer's idle season, the depth of the snow, and the severity of the cold, alike putting a stop to agricul-

tural operations. But still there are several things which require attention, and particularly the live stock, which ought to be regularly fed. The farmer must, indeed, be careful in this respect, both in summer and in winter. As there is no grass in the woods, and as new settlers cannot raise fodder for their cattle immediately, they are obliged to buy either hay or straw, or pumpkins, to feed them, or to cut down trees for them to browse upon. Oxen and young cows thrive well enough on the tender shoots of the birch, maple, &c.; but sheep must have hay or turnips, and ought to be secured from the wolves every night. Every settler should, in the course of the winter, haul a quantity of fire-wood sufficient to supply him the whole year; and the goodness of the roads will enable him to do this without much difficulty. When the weather is bad he may employ his time within doors, in improving the interior of his dwelling-house, or amusing himself by the fire, which can always be made a warm and cheerful one, from the profusion of fuel that the poorest person has continually at command. Those who delight in field-sports may go into the woods in search of deer, which usually abound in the vicinity of new settlements. In Canada, the privilege of shooting them, and all other game, belongs equally to the lord and the peasant.

The emigrant must not expect to live very comfortably at first. Pork, bread, and what vegetables he may raise, will form the chief part of his diet for perhaps two years. To these articles, however, he may occasionally add venison, if he is a tolerable sportsman. The various kinds of grain which farmers raise, enable them to enjoy a great many sorts of bread that are not known in Britain. Buck-wheat, rye, and Indian corn, make excellent cakes; and they have several ways of using flour, besides that of baking it into loaves. All the above-mentioned articles, conjoined with vegetables, poultry, and milk, which every settler can have in the course of time without much trouble or expense, afford sufficient materials for the support of an abundant and comfortable table. In Upper Canada, the people live much better than persons of a similar class in Britain; and to have proof of this, it is only necessary to visit almost any hut in the back woods. The interior of it seldom fails to display many substantial comforts, such as immense loaves of beautiful bread, entire pigs hanging round the chimney, dried venison, trenchers of milk, and bags of Indian corn. Many of the farmers indeed live in a coarse and dirty manner; but this arises from their own ignorance, not from a want of those things that are essential to comfort and neatness.

I have now detailed, in the shortest manner, the successive steps which emigrants of the lower class must take, in order to establish themselves in Upper Canada, and given a general outline of the difficulties they have to contend with, and of the counterbalancing advantages. The hardships which poor settlers must at first encounter are sometimes rather severe and trying to their patience; but if they are active and industrious, they will become tolerably comfortable, and obtain a sort of rude independence, in the course of three or four years; being then able to raise enough of every kind of produce for their own consumption, and likewise sufficient to purchase all the necessaries of life. But were the privations which emigrants must endure, on first taking up lands, infinitely greater than they *really* are, I believe few, who were well acquainted with the true state of things, would hesitate in preferring Upper Canada to Great Britain, inasmuch as most people would rather purchase ease and abundance at the expense of a few years' hard labour, than remain exposed to poverty and its attendant miseries during their whole lives, as is the lot of the bulk of the British peasantry.

All the foregoing details are founded upon actual observation; and the estimate I have given, of the advantages which poor people derive from emigrating to Upper Canada, is deduced from a

personal inspection of new settlements. My opportunities of ascertaining the correctness of all the particulars I have advanced upon this subject, have been equally various and satisfactory. I resided eight months in the most populous and extensive new settlement in the Province, and daily witnessed the increasing prosperity of thousands of people, most of whom had been forced from their native land by absolute poverty. No one who emigrates to Upper Canada, with rational views, will be disappointed. The country is becoming more agreeable every day, and only requires a large population to render it equal in point of beauty, comfort, and convenience, to any part of the earth. The delightful asylum which it affords to the poor and unfortunate of every class, is a circumstance that has hitherto been little known or appreciated, and one which is of particular importance at the present time, when agricultural and commercial embarrassments have reduced so many individuals to a state of destitution and misery.

The second class of emigrants, viz. men of small income and increasing family, will find Upper Canada, in many respects, an advantageous place of residence. When I say this, I of course include those persons only who do not derive their incomes from the exercise of any profession, and who have no obvious means of im-

proving their circumstances. Half-pay officers, annuitants, &c. are in this situation. An individual of this class may do well in Upper Canada, if he possesses a farm, and raises enough of all kinds of produce to supply his own wants. With £250 a-year, and fifty or sixty acres of land, he might, by proper management, support a large family in comfort and abundance; but he would not augment his income by farming extensively, unless he engaged in the business *practically*, and were assisted by his children; the price of labour being so high, and that of produce so low, that the agriculturist cannot derive much profit from the returns made by the soil, if he employs hired men to work it. Respectable families suffer a good deal of inconvenience from a difficulty of obtaining household servants, most of whom are both negligent and unprincipled, and conceive themselves insulted, if the person who proposes to hire them makes any inquiry about their characters. Some will not engage themselves, unless they are allowed to sit at table with the master and mistress of the house. Emigrants sometimes bring servants from Britain; but such seldom remain long with them after their arrival in Canada, their ideas and prospects being directed into new channels, by the system of independence and equality which prevails in the country. The women are

soon married, and the men become landholders. Some people bind their domestics by indentures, to continue with them for a certain time; but this plan seldom answers well, as persons so articled are apt to grow insolent and troublesome, whenever their bondage becomes disagreeable to them. The chief objection which men with large families will have to Upper Canada is, that it does not afford them the means of educating their children. Schools, at which the essential branches are taught, exist in the most secluded parts of the Province; but there is no seminary on a liberal scale, except at York and Kingston. However, the generosity which the Provincial government displays in the endowment of schools, and the encouragement which the inhabitants give to respectable teachers, will soon render the means of education as accessible in Upper Canada, as they are in the country parts of Great Britain.

To the man of capital, Upper Canada, I am sorry to say, offers few inducements. The Province indeed requires the presence of such persons, and the circulation of their capital, more than any thing else; but the benefit of a country will, of course, always be a secondary consideration with every one, when individual interest is concerned, and therefore it cannot be expected that persons of wealth should as yet emigrate to

Upper Canada. There are a good many ways of employing capital, but few which will ensure such a speedy return, as would in general be considered necessary. The mercantile business is already overdone. Merchants swarm in every part of the Province, and have, in a great measure, been the means of reducing public credit to its present low ebb. Farming is not profitable for the reasons already stated, and likewise, because there is at present no steady market for agricultural produce. Those who could afford to wait many years for the interest of money laid out, might speculate advantageously in lands. Large and excellent tracts may, at present, be purchased for half the sum they are really worth. These belong to individuals who are neither resident in the Province, nor at all connected with it, and who would gladly sell possessions in which they take no interest, and of which they do not know the value. Some people may suppose, that if such properties were in the market, the Canadians would buy them up, but they are prevented from doing so by a want of capital. The man who bought eight or ten thousand pounds worth of land, would derive no revenue from it for perhaps as many years. The persons to whom he sold it out in small portions, at a very advanced rate, probably would not be able to pay any part of the price, until they had cleared and frequent-

ly cropped it, and thus gained something by their labours; but the speculator would secure himself all the time, by not granting a *deed* to any settler, until he had paid the amount of his purchase. When money did begin to flow in, he would receive a return not only equal to the interest of the capital he had laid out, but triple or quadruple the amount of the capital itself. The man who buys lands at two or three shillings an acre, and sells it again at ten or fifteen, makes a fortunate speculation, although twenty years should intervene between the date of his making the purchase, and that of his receiving the profits it has produced.

LETTER XV.

Emigration a serious step—Ideas of different people upon the subject—Attractions of Upper Canada—Happiness of its population—State of society in the Province—Favourable to personal importance—Amusements—Field-sports—Equestrian pleasures—Horticulture—Balls and cards—Character of the Canadians—Beauty of the ladies—Emigration recommended to a certain class of persons—A consolatory hint to the ambitious—Conclusion.

THE circumstances I have concisely stated in my last letter, may enable you to form some estimate of the advantages that are to be derived from emigrating to Upper Canada, which is a step no one ought to take without reflection and serious consideration. A traveller, in describing a country, may easily communicate to the public a correct idea of the expense of living in it, the value of property, the prospects of success which different kinds of settlers have, and various other details connected with ways and means; but he will find it difficult to give his readers a just conception of those things that would exclusively affect the minds, tastes, and prejudices of people of knowledge and education.

However, there are men who feel indifferent

about what part of the world they reside in, provided they can obtain the necessaries and substantial comforts of life easily and economically, and whose impressions respecting the advantages of emigrating to any country are altogether regulated by the price of provisions, and the rate of labour there. Such persons may, of course, obtain all the satisfaction and information they can require, from the pages of a tourist.

Upper Canada, though destitute of those advantages which high agricultural improvement and a dense population never fail to bestow, is still, in many respects, a delightful place of residence; and the inhabitants often remark, that those who have spent many years of their lives in the Province, very frequently return to it when opportunity offers. There is a freedom, an independence, and a joyousness, connected with the country, which dazzle those who have visited it into a forgetfulness of its defects, and gild their most familiar reminiscences with an exhilarating brightness. There, beggary, want, and woe, never meet the eye. No care-worn anxious countenances, or famished forms, are to be seen among its inhabitants. Poverty assumes a milder aspect than it does in Europe, and the inmates of the most miserable hovel are always able to satisfy the cravings of nature, and to defend themselves from the winds of heaven. The as-

pect of a country and a people such as I have described, my dear friend, is indeed reviving and delightful to one, who, like me, has been conversant with the famishing and healthless poor of a large city; who has visited those alleys where starving human wretchedness takes refuge, and witnessed the depravity, filth, aversions, and repinings, which poverty gives birth to among the uneducated part of mankind. Though Upper Canada may be inferior to the old world, in many respects, she has still one superlative advantage over it, which is, that a man may travel through her various settlements again and again, and never have his mind agitated, nor his feelings harassed, by the voice of misery, or the murmurs of discontent.

Another circumstance tends to make Europeans partial to Upper Canada. They find themselves of much more importance there than they would be at home; for the circle of society is so limited, and the number of respectable people in the Province so small, that almost every person is able to obtain some notice and attention. There is likewise no aristocracy, and consequently no man can assume a higher station in society than another, except upon the score of superior intellect or greater wealth; the latter of which is of course rather oftener recognised as a ground of distinction than the former. A person of respectability

at once finds a place in the best company the Province affords; and neither ambition, jealousy, nor envy, is excited among individuals, there being nothing greater to aspire to. This state of things is favourable to the existence of general harmony and good-will, but rather hostile to the cultivation and advancement of manners.

The man who resides in Upper Canada must, in a great measure, depend upon himself for recreation and amusement, the small portion of society which the Province affords being so scattered, that the people who compose it cannot meet together, and minister to each other's pleasures, so often as would be desirable. However, the forests and waters are at all times open to those who enjoy the sports of the field. Hunting, of course, cannot be practised on account of the woods; but there is excellent partridge, duck, and snipe shooting, at different seasons of the year; and many of the streams abound with good fish of various kinds. Those who love equestrian exercises, and take delight in rearing horses, will be able to indulge in these amusements at comparatively little expense. It costs very little to keep a horse in Upper Canada; and one may ride, work, or drive him in a gig, without having a tax-gatherer at his elbow twice a year, as is the case in Britain. The climate and soil of the western parts of the Province are well

adapted for the culture of flowers and fine fruits; and he who loves gardening may spend his leisure hours, in a way very agreeable to himself, and useful to the public; for the Canadians have as yet paid very little attention to any of the branches of horticultural science.

During winter, the amusements I have just mentioned cannot be resorted to; but then they are less necessary, as the state of the roads permits a free communication between all parts of the country, and as a social intercourse takes place among its inhabitants. When the snow is on the ground, a great deal of visiting goes on, and balls, *pic-nics*, and card parties, very frequently occur. The Canadians, in general, partake largely of the sanguine temperament, as they are lively, inclined to hospitality, and extremely fond of pleasure. The climate they live under is indeed well adapted to excite constitutional gayety, the atmosphere of Upper Canada not being overcast by those depressing and dreary mists that often prevail for days together in Great Britain. Some of the Canadian ladies are extremely pretty; but their chief attractions lie in the *naivetè* of their manners, and in their beautifully dark and sparkling eyes. They lose their teeth and good looks eight or ten years sooner than the females of Europe; but I am unable to account for this early constitutional failure.

To conclude, I would say, that the man who is fond of a country life, who loves to be exempt from the restrictions imposed by fashion and ceremony, and whose wishes seldom stray beyond the limits of his home and domestic circle, might live very comfortably and very happily in Upper Canada; and when I say this, I also include people of education and small independent income, who, whatever be their inclinations, cannot possibly afford to indulge in the luxuries and pleasures of a town life. To such, the Province cannot fail to be an agreeable place of residence. For, since persons of small fortune cannot partake of the recreations, or mingle in the society which a large city affords, they will lose nothing by removing to Upper Canada, and their incomes will be much augmented by such a change of residence. There, they will not find themselves thrown in the shade by the false pretensions of persons of superior rank, nor see the avenues to distinction closed, and their ambitious efforts defeated, by the influence of a presuming aristocracy. I strongly suspect that all persons of taste, feeling, and judgment, *mentally* acknowledge the justness of the *principle* contained in those words which Milton has put in the mouth of the fallen arch-angel,

"Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven;"

and, consequently, one thing that must render

Upper Canada an agreeable place of residence to people of a certain class and of certain ideas is, that no person there can, upon any just ground, " lord it over" another, or claim precedence upon the plea of rank or *extrinsic* dignity.

But, my dear friend, I must now conclude my lucubrations; for the interest I take in the beautiful country I have been describing has seduced me into a prolixity which, I fear, will be pardoned by those only who have visited it, and felt its fascinations. No man of any sensibility could view Canada with indifference, or leave it without a sensation approaching to regret. And to his farewell, he would join a fervent wish, that the progress of its prosperity might never be retarded, nor its tranquillity disturbed, by the devastating effects of hostile invasion.

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

THE UNITED STATES

OF

AMERICA.

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

THE UNITED STATES

OF

AMERICA.

LETTER XVI.

Lewiston—Hatred between the Canadians and Americans—Departure from Lewiston—State of the farmers near it—Conversation at a tavern—Cambria post-office—Driver's account of himself—Story of the methodist priest—*Sang froid* of the Americans exemplified—An American breakfast—Rochester—Genesee Falls—Clyde Bridge—Grand Canal—Beauties of Canandaguia—Geneva—Reflections—Waterloo village—An American hotel—Cayuga Bridge—Arrival at Auburn—*Table d'hote* there—Specimens of new phraseology—Village described—States prison—Divine service there—Criminals—Their behaviour—Shopkeeper at Weed's port—Canal track-boat—Conversation with the captain—Town of Utica—Cotton manufactory near it—An American stage-coach—Scenery on the Mohawk—A female traveller—Albany—State legislature, and De Witt Clinton—North River steam-boat—Regulations on board—Dinner—High lands of the Hudson—A disappointment—Arrival at New York.

IN the middle of June, 1820, I bade adieu to the beautiful and happy shores of Upper Canada,

and was conveyed across the Niagara river to Lewiston. A mail-coach leaves this place for Rochester three times a week; but the proprietors having made some alteration in their usual arrangements, I was detained a day and a half; and the village and its environs consequently employed a greater share of my time and attention than their beauty or importance demanded, or I would otherwise have been willing to bestow upon them.

Lewiston occupies a large flat upon the bank of the Niagara river, and consists, like most other American villages, of a single street, which is about one mile in length. The houses are mean, and the people poor; for the neighbouring country being thinly inhabited, the place derives little advantage from trade. At the conclusion of the last American war, the legislature of New York State, desirous that there should be a town of importance here, and that the frontier near it should become populous, promised, as an inducement to the purchase and cultivation of lands, that they would grant a lot of one acre, within the limits of the projected city, to every individual, when he had cleared a certain quantity of ground upon the Niagara river, and paid the price of it to government. But the offer of this *douceur* does not appear to have had the anticipated effect, as the greater part of the frontier

in the vicinity of Lewiston remains unbought and uncultivated.

Although the Americans and Canadians upon the Niagara frontier, are not a quarter of a mile distant from each other, the difference that exists between them, in point of character and ideas, is as perceptible as the line of demarcation which divides the two countries.

I entered America with prepossessions somewhat unfavourable. Having resided in Canada for a considerable time, I had usually heard the people of the United States mentioned with dislike and reprobation. Though I did not imbibe all the prejudices of the Canadians, I supposed they had a more justifiable foundation than that of mere personal animosity, which has arisen between the two nations in consequence of political and commercial circumstances.

During the rebellion, many loyalists abandoned the United States, and retired to Canada, where they received lands, as a reward for their adherence to the British government. The aversion, with which they regarded the revolutionists, never decayed, and was, of course, communicated to their descendants, who now form a considerable part of the population of Upper Canada.—The Americans returned their hostility with vehemence; and the two nations became so completely estranged from each other, that the long

peace which followed the rebellion had little effect in restoring harmony between them. However, the invasion of Canada in 1812 removed all chance of reconciliation, and made both parties more personal, and more inveterate, in their dislike. And, as the social and moral condition of the two countries is growing more dissimilar every day, the aversion, with which their inhabitants regard each other, is not likely to diminish.

I departed from Lewiston before sun-rise, in a small waggon drawn by one horse. The driver, who was one of the stage proprietors, informed me, that, as the mail-coach did not arrive the preceding night, as had been expected, he found it necessary to carry me forward in a humbler style; but observed, by way of consolation, that we would go like a lark. Indeed, at first we went almost as swiftly as a lark, though rather less smoothly.

After a few miles hard driving, we came up to a man on foot, carrying a large saw over his shoulder; and my attendant immediately requested him to ride with us, at the same time offering a seat on his knee, as the bench in the waggon was too short to admit three persons. When all was adjusted, we pursued our journey, and my fellow-travellers entered into conversation about the value of the farms along the road, and

the circumstances of their possessors. There was scarcely a tract of land in sight which they did not criticise, and pronounce to be under mortgage. To these details, they added sketches of the characters of the various individuals whose affairs they commented upon, and summed up the whole with accounts of the methods such persons had occasionally employed, to defraud their creditors, and evade public justice. Thus, in the course of an hour, I had many opportunities of hearing the local scandals of the new country into which I had entered.

The circumstances I learned from the conversation of these men, whose veracity I had no reason to doubt, astonished me a good deal. It appeared that seven or eight farmers in a dozen were insolvent; though the aspect of their lands, and an estimate of the advantages they had enjoyed in the course of their agricultural labours, rendered the thing, at first view, almost incredible. But I soon discovered that their embarrassments had not been brought about by general causes affecting the prosperity of the country, but were the consequences of their own imprudence, idleness, and extravagance. In the northern parts of the United States all trade is carried on by means of barter, the farmers paying the merchants with grain, or produce of some kind. It is evident that, when this is the case,

a man may be entirely deceived with regard to his means of liquidating the demands against him. When he engages in any new extravagance, he resolves to bring an additional quantity of land under cultivation, and also flatters himself with the prospect of high prices and great crops. But, on the arrival of spring, he finds that he is unable to clear and sow more ground than usual; and, perhaps, an unfavourable autumn, and depressed state of the market, afterwards increase his embarrassments. Thus he sinks into a state of insolvency, and is forced to mortgage his farm to save himself from suit and imprisonment.

About six in the morning we drove up to a small house, which appeared to be a sort of tavern. The landlord was at the door ready to receive us, and the following conversation took place:

Landlord. Good morning, gentlemen.

Driver. Good morning, mister.

L. Very warm, but pretty considerable of air stirring.

D. I guess so. Can we get any thing to drink?

L. Well, I suppose you can. What liquor would you please to have?

D. Brandy, I guess.

L. We've got nothing in the house but whisky, sir.

D. Let us have some then—by God I'll treat; but where's Bill?

L. Cleared out, I guess.

D. What an almighty shame! and where's his family?

L. Cleared out too, mister.

D. 'Tarnation! well, I vow one feels pretty damned cheap, when a fellow clears out without paying scores.

L. By the life he does—but here's success to Bill (*drinking*), though he owes me for a pair of shoes.

D. Bill owes me eight dollars and fifty-seven cents and a half.

L. Cash?

D. Ho, good morning to you! no, no, I'll be satisfied with three hundred rails and some leather (*a pause*). Bill knows what he's about; did he clear out slick?

L. Yes, mister, right off; but I guess he's still in the bush, and I swear I could find him if I had a mind.

D. Bill will steer southward.

L. I guess he will—howsomever, here's success to Bill, and damn the shoes.

We now continued our journey, and, while passing through a long piece of woods, my companion began to blow his horn; for we were approaching Cambria post-office, and his object

was, to warn them to have the mail ready for him. We soon approached this post-town, and found that it contained a small house, and a great many musquetoes. When we stopped, the post-master made his appearance; but, instead of asking for the mail-bag, quietly re-entered the house, and soon returned with a glass of spirits in his hand, which he presented to my companion. Having then inquired who I was, and why we travelled in a waggon instead of the stage, he took the mail-bag, and, after opening sundry padlocks, shook it violently over the dusty road, till one three-cornered letter dropt out, the address of which we left him attempting in vain to decipher.

About nine o'clock, we stopped at my companion's house, and I was immediately provided with breakfast. The house was large and well-built, and stood in the midst of shrubbery, having upwards of eighty acres of cultivated land behind it, part of which afforded pasture to a flock of beautiful sheep. Eighteen or twenty fine cattle lay indolently round a barn full of fodder, and dozens of pigs and poultry occupied a yard in front of the house. After we had got into the waggon again, my host gave an account of himself. Any American will willingly gratify a stranger in this way; and if the truth is unfavourable to him, he will invent falsehoods, ra-

ther than not play the egotist. This man informed me, that he had begun life with nothing, but now possessed the farm already described, and eight thousand dollars, besides what was owing him. "Although I drive the mail," said he, "I guess I'm not obliged to, for I have a farm where I can take my ease, and *tigger* about independent of any one. Some of you English, I know, would feel pretty damned small when driving a stage; but in America we are all equal, when our employments are honest ones—and why not? for we cannot choose our station, howsomever much we may try to. Aye, man appoints, and God disappoints. Had things turned out different, I might have been president of the States, and Jem Monroe coach-driver." I assented to the justness of his remarks; and could not help thinking, that such opinions must be a great source of happiness to the lower classes of the American people. Among them, when a man rises in the world, he neither abandons his usual habits, manners, and companions, nor feels afraid lest his behaviour should betray the rank of life in which he formerly was. He does not torment himself with forming plans for the support of his newly-acquired importance, nor finds it necessary to intrigue for admission into circles immediately above him; but is satisfied if his

wealth gains him a little additional consequence in the *bar-room,* and increases his influence at township meetings or county elections.

It now became excessively hot, the dust flew in suffocating clouds, and myriads of musquetoes attacked us with unrelenting fury. We had just entered upon a very long cross-way, and the horse could not go beyond a walk for upwards of an hour. This cross-way, which deserves the attention of the traveller on account of its strength and uniformity, extends three miles, and was constructed during the last American war, for the purpose of improving the communication between the frontier and interior of the country, at the expense of four thousand dollars.

About noon we stopped at a house to give our horse some water. As we alighted, our driver told me that I would see some methodists, and said he intended " quizzing the damned creatures." Presently two women made their appearance, and one of them inquired anxiously about her husband, who had gone to Lewiston some days before to preach the gospel. The driver informed her in return, that a person, answering the description she gave, had slept at his house a few nights ago, and seemed very serious, frequently telling them that he would not be permitted to work much longer in the vine-

yard. Early next morning he departed, and they soon after heard, that he had been drowned in crossing the Niagara river.

All this was delivered with the utmost gravity; but the narrator did not meet with the implicit credit he expected; for the mistress of the house immediately came into the adjoining apartment, where I had remained and heard all that was passing, and questioned me in the following formidable manner: "Well now, 'squire, ha'n't you heard nothing of no methodist priest never being drowned at the ferry over *agen* Lewiston?" I said I had not. "Ha'n't you?" reiterated she, putting her hands upon her sides. "Indeed I have not."—"There now," cried she, after a pause, "I guess as how I sees how it is, that that there man, who's never no gentleman, has been trying to work me, by telling me on things that ha'n't never had no existence." After some time, the driver retracted all that he had said, and dispelled the anxiety of the two ladies, who were so polite as to treat him to a glass of *bitters*, notwithstanding the panic he had maliciously occasioned. When we had proceeded on our journey again, he said, "Why, 'squire, I guess you don't seem to laugh at the fun I set a-going." I told him there was no fun in making people miserable. "Hoity toity," cried he, "they are methodists you know—I wouldn't have given

them to understand that I lied at all, hadn't the priest's wife told me, that her husband always declared that I showed myself a gentleman in the way I treated him, whenever he stopped at my house. Now, sir, when a man calls me a gentleman, I always wish to use him like one—and so you see as how I let the pig out of the bag."

After driving about ten miles, we stopped at a small village, and waited until the stage-coach arrived from Rochester. The two drivers then agreed, that it should return with me to that place, and that the passengers it had contained should be carried on to Lewiston in the waggon. This arrangement being made, three people, with their baggage, were crammed into the latter vehicle, exposed to a burning noon-day sun and clouds of dust. They submitted without a murmur; and this incident exemplified that passiveness which characterizes the Americans, when things of small moment occur. They bear the petty miseries and disagreeable accidents of human life with a most philosophical *sang froid*, and scorn to betray any sensibility to trifles, that slightly affect their personal comfort.

I now took my seat in the stage, and travelled till late in the afternoon. Next morning we started at four o'clock, and after a drive of eighteen miles, reached a pretty little village called

Farming. Here I stopped to breakfast; but, as this meal was rather long in making its appearance, and as I betrayed some symptoms of impatience, my hostess sent me out to the back-yard to look at her pigs, telling me that every thing would be ready before I returned to the house. She was as good as her word; for I had made but few observations on the inmates of the stye, when she called me in. The table afforded the most wonderful variety I ever had before me, when breakfasting alone. There were ham, veal, fish, eggs, toast, cucumbers, cheese, preserved apples, gingerbread, short-cake, salad, and coffee, and also several other small dishes, of which I neither knew the nature, nor did I venture to attack them.

About mid-day I arrived at the village of Rochester, which is eighty-five miles distant from Lewiston, and lies upon the bank of the Gennesee river. It contains about three thousand inhabitants, and has the neatest appearance imaginable, almost all the houses being regularly built and painted white. The streets, which are spacious, present a succession of well-furnished shops, and the bustle which continually pervades them, gives the whole place an air of activity and commerce. This town was begun to be built only about five years ago, and its present magnitude and importance appear astonishing even to

the people of the United States, among whom villages increase more rapidly than in any other part of the world. Rochester owes its prosperity chiefly to the fine water power which it commands. Besides the Gennesee river, there are many smaller streams in the immediate vicinity of the town, that are admirably adapted for driving machinery. Grist-mills, saw-mills, carding-machines and manufactories, &c. are always in operation here; and I was shewn a very ingenious and newly-invented apparatus for making nails, together with various other pieces of curious mechanism, which I had neither time nor inclination to inspect minutely.

In the afternoon I took a ramble through the village, and visited the Great Falls of the Gennesee river, which are close by it. Their pitch is eighty feet; yet, the quantity of water thrown over them being small, the effect is not very grand or imposing, particularly to one who has viewed the Niagara cataracts a few days before. They are unfortunately surrounded with machinery; for the rattling of mills, and the smoke of iron founderies, of course, neither harmonize well with the wildness of uncultivated nature, nor give any additional interest to a scene where they are so manifestly out of place.

I next strolled about two miles out of town, that I might survey Clyde Bridge, or rather the

ruins of it; for half of this magnificent structure fell several weeks before I arrived at Rochester. The bridge, which was built of wood, and consisted of a single arch, was thrown across the Gennesee river, for the purpose of opening a nearer route between Canandaguia and Lewiston.

The road I took led me to the edge of the cliffs that confine the Gennesee river. This stream roared ninety feet beneath me; and a half arch stretched far above my head, as it were "suspended in mid air;" while on the opposite cliffs, heaps of planks, shattered beams, and massy supporters, lay in horrible confusion, being the remains of that part of the structure which had fallen. Nothing can exceed the exquisite beauty, the elegant proportions, and the aerial magnificence, of that half of the bridge which is still entire. Its complicated architecture, the colossal span of its arch, its appalling height above the surface of the water, and the noble scenery around, fill the mind with astonishment. A little way up the river, the Lesser Gennesee Falls rush over broken rocks; while the woods, which bound the prospect on all sides, and darkly overshadow the hoary cliffs, communicate a wildness to the scene, that makes the imaginative spectator almost believe that the bridge above him has been raised by the spells of a magician, rather than by the hands of man.

Clyde Bridge, when entire, formed a piece of architecture which was altogether unrivalled by any thing of a similar kind in Europe or America. The span of the arch was 352 feet, and the height of its summit above the surface of the river 196 feet. The bridge itself was 718 long and 30 wide; and though the whole structure contained more than 130,000 feet of timber, it was completed by twenty workmen in the space of nine months.

Next morning I proceeded to the village of Pittsford, and, while they were preparing breakfast for me, walked to the Grand Canal, which passes within a quarter of a mile of the place. Here I found about a dozen labourers actively employed in digging and embanking. The country being level, and the soil easily worked, they made rapid progress in the excavation; the parts of it that were completed measured forty feet wide, and four feet in depth. The workmen told me, that they were boarded by the contractor, and received only half a dollar a day; a wage which shews how much the price of labour has declined in the populous parts of the United States. The commissioners for the Grand Canal divided the line into sections of one mile each; these were publicly contracted for, and the person, who made the lowest tender, had, of course, the preference. Many of the first contractors realized

a great deal of money by the business; but there is now so much competition in the purchase of the sections, that the persons desirous of obtaining them are obliged to offer at the lowest rates possible.

About 12 o'clock we reached the village of Canandaguia, which is 29 miles from Rochester, and it is indeed difficult for description to do justice to its surpassing beauty and fascinating elegance. Canandaguia is about a mile long, and consists of one street, both sides of which are ornamented with a row of lovely poplar trees; behind these are the houses, placed at a little distance from each other, and generally having shrubbery and flower-plots before them. One usually connects the idea of poverty and meanness with that of a village; but Canandaguia presents an appearance very different from any thing of the kind, the worst habitations in it being extremely neat and clean, and the best highly elegant and tasteful. There is a beautiful church at one end of the street; and a handsome meeting-house, jail, county-room, academy, and hotel, adorn the other parts of the village, although its population does not exceed 1800 souls. It is situated upon a cultivated slope, at the bottom of which lies a lake, several miles in circumference, and encircled with pretty cottages and rich forests.

Fifteen miles beyond Canandaguia is Geneva, a village nearly as captivating in its aspect as the former. It too has a lake, I suppose as beautiful as its celebrated namesake in Europe, which Rousseau has immortalized. In passing through the United States, the traveller is particularly struck with the elegance and magnitude of the villages; and often feels inclined to ask where the labouring classes reside, as not a vestige of the meanness and penury, that generally characterize their inhabitants, is to be discovered. One would almost suppose Canandaguia and Geneva to have been built as places of summer resort, for persons of fortune and fashion; since so much taste, elegance, comfort, and neatness, are displayed in the design, appearance, and arrangement of the houses which compose them.

After we had passed through Geneva, I could not help looking back upon it with a tender regret. The lake, which stretched itself beneath the village in stillness and purity, had never reflected any but scenes of peace. The forests that waved around, had never been invaded by any visitors more rude than the husbandman or wood-cutter; and the fields, then glowing with the richness of harvest, were annually permitted to ripen their crops, and to distribute plenty among a happy people. The village had, as yet, known but one generation of inhabitants;

and nothing that composed the prospect had hitherto been witness to the oppressions, miseries, and iniquities of mankind, as is the case with almost every stone and bit of ground in Europe. All things were young, vigorous, bright, and hopeful. But how long was this delightful state of things to last? Would not revolutions of different kinds speedily disturb the calm that prevailed? Was it not to be feared that the troublous scenes of the old world would ultimately be reacted in the new, and make its people look back, with painful regret, to the outset of their history?

We next stopped at the village of Waterloo, eight miles beyond Geneva. It happened to be court-day here, and the place was so crowded with judges, lawyers, and farmers, that it had a very gay and animated appearance. The hotel at which I alighted particularly drew my attention, as it was three stories high, and built of brick. As I proposed to dine before we set out again, I communicated my intention to the landlord, who ushered me into the bar-room, which was very large and commodious, and full of *Yankey* loungers. There were fifteen or sixteen chairs in the apartment, but I could not procure one for my own accommodation, although five or six persons only were seated.—But each of these individuals occupied three or

four chairs. He sat upon one, laid his legs upon another, whirled round a third, and, perhaps, chewed the paint from the back of a fourth.—However, those who had segars in their teeth, contented themselves with collecting the smoke in their mouths, and blowing it out in volumes when any one passed. None of them offered to resign me a chair; but I suppose the clouds of tobacco vapour, which filled the room, prevented them from observing that I wanted one.

Fortunately, the landlord soon announced that dinner was ready, and shewed me into an elegant room, fifty-six feet long.

Four miles beyond Waterloo is Cayuga Lake, which we crossed by means of a wooden bridge, one mile and a furlong in length. The supporters of the bridge rest upon the bottom of the lake all the way through, the average depth of water being six feet. The bridge is wide enough to admit a carriage, and likewise foot-passengers; and the whole structure is so strong and well knit together, that, notwithstanding its vast extent, scarcely any tremour is perceptible when a heavy-loaded waggon passes over it.—When viewed from one extremity, it appears gradually and beautifully to converge into a narrow point at the other, and, at last, eludes the eye in the minuteness of its termination.

About six in the evening we arrived at the

village of Auburn, and I abandoned the stage there, intending to go to Utica by way of the Grand Canal. Having seen my portmanteau disposed of, I entered the tavern, and desired that water might be sent into a room. "Water!" exclaimed the landlord, "why, here's water and towels enough in the bar—I guess all the gentlemen washes there." I surveyed the bar from curiosity, and found things in such a state, that I would rather have worn the coat of dust I had received while in the stage, than attempted ablution in it. However, after some parley and hesitation, my apparently unheard-of request was granted, and soon afterwards they rung a bell to announce that tea was ready. I immediately obeyed the summons; and, on entering the public room, found eighteen or twenty people already seated at a table, which was abundantly furnished with beef-steaks, ham, fowls, preserved fruit, cake, cheese, &c. The hostess, who was rather pretty, stood at one end of the table, and poured out tea, gracefully enough, to those who called for it, and occasionally joined in the conversation, with the same ease as if she had been one of the guests. Most of the people were respectable enough in appearance, but very plain in their manners. A good deal of detached unconnected conversation passed among them; but some of it was in such extraordinary language,

that I found no difficulty in remembering the expressions *verbatim*, until tea was over, when I wrote them down, and shall now give the reader the following specimens:

"Take some beef, 'squire.—No, I guess not, I don't feel much like eating to-night.—'Squire, is your cip out?—It will be so right off, ma'am.—My tea is too strong.—I conclude you're nervous, sir.—I vow, ma'am, I can't sleep when I take much tea.—Indeed I like tea, it makes me feel good.—I agree with you, I never feel so spry as when I've got a good raft of tea aboard of me.—I calculate upon there being some electricity in tea, it makes one feel so smart.—An't you from Canada lately, mister? how are politics there?—Nothing stirring in that way, sir.—I conclude to go there very soon, and hope to see you; and if I can rip out your quarters, I'll give you a damned blow up.—Well now, I shall feel pretty considerably tickled to see you.—You didn't stay long at Canandaguia?—No, I dined at full jump, and went right off in the stage, which carried me slick to this place.—I fear that little shaver (child) is troubling on you, sir.—Not at all, ma'am, pretty considerable of a boy, I guess.—Yes, sir, only three years old, and knows his letters.—He was in the *abbs* and *ebbs* last week.—He must be awfully smart!!!"

In the morning I strolled through the town of

Auburn, and found it even more extensive and respectable than I had anticipated. It contains spacious streets, excellent houses, plenty of shops, and about 3000 inhabitants; and, moreover, appears to be a place of considerable trade. There are two churches in it, one of which is extremely pretty in its architecture; and I cannot but allude to the attention which the Americans invariably bestow upon buildings for religious worship. No place in the State of New York, that has any pretensions to the name of a village, is destitute of a respectable church and regularly ordained clergyman. This circumstance is highly creditable to the Americans, and ought to refute the notion so commonly entertained, that they are not a religious people; for it is not very probable, that individuals would furnish means for the erection of churches, if they had no object in view but national policy, or the enjoyment of human applause. Auburn is particularly interesting to the traveller, from its being the site of the second penitentiary erected in the State of New York. This building is extensive, strong, and of a gloomy appearance, being composed of dark-coloured stone, and surrounded with a very high and thick wall. The town also contains a court-house, bank, printing-office, extensive book-store, &c. and even a soda-water shop. This last appendage of luxury is to

be found in most American villages; which, I believe, in general comprise a greater number of comforts and conveniences within their limits, than places of double their magnitude and population in Great Britain.

Next day being Sunday, I went to the State's prison, that I might hear divine service performed before the criminals. The public are freely admitted on these occasions, and when I reached the gate in the wall that surrounds the building, I found eighty or ninety people waiting for entrance. I was a good deal astonished at this circumstance, as it was impossible to suppose them all strangers; and I thought it argued a degree of depravity in the inhabitants of Auburn, to make a practice of idly viewing the children of guilt, and the outcasts of society. In a little time, the female part of the crowd was admitted, and soon after the males. We ascended many flights of stairs, and traversed several dreary passages, along which soldiers were posted with fixed bayonets, before we reached the place of public worship, which lies next the roof of the building. I had scarcely seated myself, when the clanking of fetters struck my ear, and, as the criminals soon began to enter the apartment, I was wholly occupied, for some time, in scanning their countenances as they passed. They were all dressed in the same garb, and looked as if they lived well, and met with

gentle treatment. Their number amounted to about two hundred, and I observed eighteen or twenty blacks among them. When they had seated themselves on the benches assigned them, the clergyman gave out a psalm, which was sung in the worst style possible, and then proceeded with the service in the usual manner. It was indeed shocking to hear their fetters clank, during the singing of hymns, and in the midst of prayers. The sermon was an indifferent one; but I must confess I paid but little attention to it, being chiefly employed in examining the faces of the criminals, and endeavouring, by physiognomical means, to ascertain who were the most hardened and depraved among them. A majority of the countenances had a stupid expression, but a few bore the marks of strong passions and mental atrocity; and, I believe, a detailed inspection might have enabled me to discover in the features of all, an index to their respective characters. I should have been glad to have put to the test the systems of Spurzheim and Lavater, by applying their principles to the subjects then before me. It is in jails, penitentiaries, and madhouses alone, that physiognomy can be studied with advantage and effect. The common multitude pass so quietly through their term of existence, and are so seldom the victims of strong and constant passions, that their countenances, par-

taking of the character of their lives, afford comparatively little scope for the observations of the physiognomist.

Among the criminals were three females. One was an Indian woman, who had murdered her husband under circumstances of indescribable barbarity. The other two were confined for stealing. They sat at a little distance from the men, who apparently paid very little attention to the words of the clergyman; indeed, what could be expected from a congregation consisting almost entirely of housebreakers, highway-robbers, murderers, incendiaries, swindlers, and perjured persons?

Next morning, there was a large party at my hostess's breakfast table, in consequence of its being court-day. Judges, lawyers, clients, pursuers, and defendants, all associated together good-humouredly, and without ceremony, and seemed to vie with each other in the use of the knife and fork. The judges had no useless pride. They assumed none of the airs of the bench while at table, as they and the lawyers treated each other with equal degrees of respect. I must confess, however, that I could not approve of their manners, which were slovenly and clownish, and unlike those of people of education, or knowledge of the world.

After breakfast, my host drove me in his

waggon to a place called Weed's Port, upon the bank of the Grand Canal, eight miles from Auburn; and here he left me to wait till the track-boat made its appearance. I walked for some time along the canal; but at last becoming tired, I went into a small shop on the way-side, which contained a few dozen candlesticks, several snuff-boxes, and some pieces of ribbon, &c. The owner stood behind the counter, and I merely bid him good morning, and seated myself; for the Americans have a very slight opinion of a man who uses any ceremony towards them. After some time, he took down a bottle and dusty glass, and asked me if I would drink some bitters, but this I declined. "Well now," said he, "I swear you're from the old country, 'squire." I told him that I was. "I guessed as much," returned he, and having given me a very significant look, he cautiously put the cork in the bottle, and returned it to its place. There was a long pause. "Belike, 'squire," said he again, "as you a'nt in drinking trim, you may have a mind to read a bit. Here's my brother's Treatise on the Trinity." He accordingly presented me with a small volume, which I read until the canal-boat came up.

On going aboard the boat, I found its accommodations of a much meaner description than I

expected. It was about thirty feet long, had a small cabin fore and aft, and was drawn by two horses, at the rate of nearly four miles an hour. The water in the canal was four feet deep, and tolerably transparent, but I could not perceive that it had any current. I soon entered into conversation with the captain, and the following dialogue passed between us:

"Have you any canals like this in Britain?"

"No; none so extensive."

"Well, now, sir, this is a great thing for our country, a'nt it?"

"Yes; you owe all this to De Witt Clinton."

"Well, I don't know—some say yes, and some say no, but he had plenty to help him; however, you, being a foreigner, must judge impartially."

"De Witt Clinton had some assistance of course, but to him must be ascribed the merit of completing the canal."

"I know that's the general *idear* in Britain. You all think De Witt Clinton a great man there."

"Yes; we think him the first statesman in America."

"Well, he's considerable of a statesman, though all don't think so *now*; but in a country like ours, the governors are continually changing, and the people alter their opinions,

and are led about like a pig by the nose. Howsomever, De Witt Clinton has done a great deal of good, though all don't like him."

"It would appear so by the last election—he had a very small majority in his favour."

"Very small, I guess—he had a pretty hard run, and a good many buck-tails to fight with."

"What are buck-tails?"

"The name, sir, has it origin from the Tammany society, in New York. That society is named after a celebrated Indian chief, and the members of it parade the streets on the fourth of July, with buck-tails hanging behind their heads."

"Why do the Tammany society oppose De Witt Clinton?"

"God only knows—but he has enemies of another kind; for the lawyers are strongly against him, because he curtailed their fees. He cut their nails so close, that their fingers han't done smarting yet."

"This curtailment of fees was a great benefit to the country?"

"Aye, to be sure it was; but you must know there are a great many young lawyers in the State of New York—a damned deal too many. They are pretty smart fellows, and impose upon the farmers and country people, and make them believe what they like."

"What do they say against De Witt Clinton?"

"They say, that if he continues in office, aristocracy will be introduced, and that he and his party will gain so much power, that, bye and bye, we will have tithes and taxes, like the poor oppressed people of England. De Witt Clinton and his party are thought to be too fond of the English. They don't wish to go to war with them, because they are akin to them. His party are called damned *tories*; and I have often been called so myself, but I don't care."

"Is it not astonishing that people should believe all these things?"

"Ah, sir, the people of the United States will believe any thing; and if one takes the proper way, it is as easy to lead them as it is to lead ringed ox."

The country through which the canal extends is far from being beautiful or interesting. Nothing but woods are to be seen, except in a few places, where cultivation has recently been commenced, and where incipient villages raise their unassuming heads.

The land which we passed was so low and swampy in many places, that it had been necessary to embank the canal on both sides with immense mounds of earth. Some of these have sunk eight or ten feet since they were first made, and others are crumbling away so fast, that they

will soon be completely undermined, if the action of the water is not prevented by a covering of planks. It will hardly be believed, that there are wretches so depraved as wantonly to make sluices in them, to permit the escape of the water. But it is so, as the legislature of the State of New York has found it necessary to pass a law for the severe punishment of such offenders; and it is to be hoped that none of the guilty will escape its vengeance.

The canal-boat stopped at a small village called Syracuse, a little after sunset. All the passengers slept on board; and in the morning, at dawn, the horses were again yoked. We travelled the whole day without interruption, and reached Utica about nine at night.

Utica is ninety-six miles from Auburn, and is a very extensive and flourishing village, containing, I suppose, five thousand inhabitants, with many spacious streets and excellent buildings.—The canal passes through the middle of it, (though the water had only been admitted within one mile of the town at the time I was there) and this advantage must hereafter render Utica a place of no small commercial importance.

Next day I visited a cotton-manufactory, three miles from the village. The machinery, which is very beautiful, and occupies four flats of a large building, is moved entirely by water.—

There are about eighty persons employed:—these consist chiefly of women and children, who have a much more healthful and happy look than any work people I ever saw in British manufactories. Many of the females were reading the Bible, and others sat sewing, during the intervals of leisure which their respective occupations afforded them. One woman could attend two looms; and each of these, on an average, made twenty-five yards of cotton a-day. Their wages were one *cent* per yard; part of which was paid in goods, and they provided themselves with board. The children received 14s., New York currency (7s. 7d. sterling), per week, and worked twelve hours every day. Cotton stuff was sold at the factory at 16 *cents* per yard (8½d. sterling); the superintendent of which informed me, that the concern proved very profitable, and that he found no difficulty whatever in getting labourers, or, as he delicately termed them, *helps*, upon the terms already mentioned.

I quitted Utica at two in the morning, in the mail-coach. In America, the comfort of a stage-passenger is much more attended to than in Britain. He is not obliged to walk through dark, and perhaps dirty streets to the mail-office, and to seek for people to convey his baggage there in the middle of the night; as the coach calls at his residence, if within the limits

of the town, and takes him comfortably up. I had five fellow-passengers; but it continued so dark, and they were so silent for a considerable time, that I neither could see their faces, nor ascertain what sort of characters they were; but I afterwards found that they were a lawyer from the state of Ohio, a young lady, who appeared to be his niece, a stout jolly Irishman, a simpleton from Lower Canada, and another person, whose character I could not discover.—At five o'clock we stopped and had breakfast, which was a very good one, but much too early to be acceptable to me.

The country, a little way beyond Utica, is in a high state of cultivation, and the different farms which compose the prospect present aspects equally various and beautiful. The road winds, for a considerable way, along the Mohawk river, and, in consequence of this, much delightful scenery meets the eye of a traveller. Lofty cliffs, covered with trees, tower on one side of the stream, and are vividly reflected in its tranquil waters; in the midst of which, clusters of romantic rocky islands raise their verdant heads, and add indescribable variety to the scene. Nothing can be more wild than the appearance of the Mohawk, the sides of it being bordered with immense fragments of brown rock, which have

fallen from the cliffs above, and darkly overshadow the waters. The fields around are level and extensive, and, when we passed, were covered with crops, the different colours of which formed an immense variegated carpet, enlivened with pretty villas, nurseries, flocks of cattle, and cottages.

In the middle of the day, as we were driving past a house on the road side, a female suddenly threw up one of the windows, and bawled out, "You *can't* give me a seat in the stage?"—"Yes; mistress, I guess I can," cried the driver, pulling up his horses. "Well, then, let us aboard," said she, hurrying towards us with a trunk in her hand; "it's most almighty hot."—"I think as how you'll feel it hotter when we get agoing," replied the driver, "there's a raft of folks inside to-day."—"Oh," returned she, "I guess once we're started we'll go as regular as a tea-party." Having seated herself, she proceeded to arrange her luggage, and seemed particularly anxious to preserve from accident a large bottle, which was fastened on the top of her trunk. "Well now, *mister*," said she to me, "don't put your feet *agen* my trunk; for, if you don't take care on my bottle, you'll be breaking on't. I've been sick on this road this fortnight. Dr S—— raised me last week; he's a dreadful clever man, and said, if I didn't begin taking on wine, I would

never get smart, and this is my bottle of wine. Now you, *mister*, keep back your feet, or you'll be breaking on't."

About ten at night we arrived in the town of Albany, which is ninety-six miles distant from Utica. The tavern at which I lodged there was the best I had yet seen in the course of my travels, and things were conducted very much in the English style. At the hotels in the United States, one does not meet with that obsequiousness and unremitting attention, which are commonly shewn to strangers by the innkeepers of other countries; but this is surely far from being a disadvantage; for if a man always gets what he wants on calling for it, he has reason to congratulate himself upon being free from the torment of seeing a servant in perpetual attendance. He likewise gains by it in another way. In America, travellers are not expected to bestow any gratuity upon the waiters of a tavern, except in the large towns; and, consequently, one is exempted from the disagreeable and expensive tax which custom imposes upon people in England.

I can say little about Albany, having spent only one night and part of a morning in it. The town, although it presents neither an elegant nor attractive appearance, looks somewhat interesting from the antiquity of its aspect,—a thing little to be expected in North America,

the cities there being all comparatively of recent origin. Albany is quite a commercial town, and seems to be a place of much business; it is likewise the resort of a number of strangers and travellers during the summer season, in consequence of its vicinity to the celebrated mineral springs of Ballston and Saratoga, which are annually frequented by most of the fashionables of the Union; and which have become, I am told, nearly as gay and brilliant as some of the second-rate watering-places in England. But the inhabitants of most cities of the Union are so engaged in commercial transactions, that they cannot easily leave their counting-houses, during the most busy season of the year, or afford to pass the summer in idleness, and in the enjoyment of expensive pleasures.

Albany is the seat of the legislature of the State of New York; and though the members who compose this body, do not, I believe, possess very great abilities, the talents of De Witt Clinton, their illustrious governor, shed a splendour over their proceedings, of which they would otherwise be destitute. This man is doubtless the most profound political economist in North America. The vast scope of his mind, his grand views of human society, the magnificence of his projects, and benefits he has rendered to that part of the Union over which he presides, rank him high

among the great characters of the present day; while his writings and speeches, at the same time, prove him to be a scholar, an orator, a statesman, and an enlightened philosopher. The addresses he delivers at the opening of the legislature, are doubtless the finest that are now pronounced on similar occasions, in any part of the world.

The powerful talents which De Witt Clinton possesses, and the important objects he has effected in the course of his administration, have created him many enemies. At his last election, the tide of opposition ran so strong, that he had only a majority of 1100 votes. The leading charges brought against him are, ambition and love of monarchy.

About ten in the morning I quitted Albany in one of the North River steam-boats. These steam-boats are very large, being six or seven hundred tons burden, and fitted up so as to afford the best accommodations possible. I found about sixty passengers on board, among whom were a number of ladies, and some very genteel-looking people. I did not observe any thing remarkable or amusing, except certain regulations which were framed and hung up in the cabins, stating, that no person was allowed to smoke below decks, or to spit on the floor, or to go to bed with boots on, under a penalty of half a dollar. The practice of going to bed with boots

on is, I am told, no uncommon thing in America. The New Englanders, it is said, sometimes do not even take off their spurs before retiring to rest; and a gentleman humorously informed me, that he once saw one of these people come down to breakfast, unconsciously dragging a pair of sheets at his heels, the spurs upon which had got entangled in the cotton while he was asleep!

At eleven o'clock, we had a luncheon of ham, cold beef, &c.; and, while it lasted, I observed many people calling loudly and unsuccessfully for water, an article which the steward had, for obvious reasons, contrived to render very scarce. About three, the bell rang to announce dinner; and then a dreadful hubbub ensued, which rendered it necessary for one to take care of his shins. Most of the male passengers rushed tumultuously down the cabin stairs, jostling, pushing, and squeezing each other; and, having secured seats, they attacked every article indiscriminately; stretched across the table, and helped themselves with their own knives and forks; and, when any one asked for part of a dish, they sent him the plate that contained it.

The banks of the Hudson are covered with beautiful farms, and exhibit a good deal of variety, being sometimes high and rocky, and sometimes very low. There are a number of fine-looking villages upon them, and some tasteful

country-seats belonging to the wealthy inhabitants of New York. In several places, groups of rocky islands embellish the river; and the scenery is altogether sufficiently interesting to keep one on the deck of the steam-boat, during the greater part of the voyage.

At seven in the evening we had tea; and it soon after became dark, which I lamented extremely, as we would necessarily pass most of the high lands of the Hudson (which I am told afford exquisite scenery) during the night. However, I determined to get up before sun-rise next day, that I might at least see a little of those celebrated high lands, and accordingly went to bed about eleven; but the first thing that awakened me the following morning was the noise of laying the table for breakfast; so, from my unfortunate propensity to slumber, I lost all the shew, in the same way as Goldsmith's alderman lost a sight of the coronation; and did not even enjoy the consolation he experienced after his disappointment—that of having had pleasant dreams. We partook of a noble breakfast; and at eight o'clock reached New York harbour, having been little more than twenty-two hours on our passage-way, although the distance run was one hundred and seventy-six miles.

LETTER XVII.

New York—People on the streets—Blacks—Broadway described—A fashionable promenade—Personal appearance of the ladies—Gentlemen—New York hotels—*Table d'hotes*—Style of manners at these—Americans indifferent to convivial pleasures—Private boarding-houses—Anniversary of national independence—Festivities of the day—Scene on Broadway—Quietness of the populace—Amusements of New York—Theatre—Vauxhall Gardens—American museum—Wax-work—Apollino—Academy of fine arts—Colonel Trumbull—His pictures and style of painting—Chatham Garden—Steam-boat cotillion parties—American troops—Not respectable—Characteristic anecdote—Military College—American navy—Its high state of discipline—Booksellers' shops—British authors most in repute in America—Circulating libraries—Advantages of New York as a place of residence—Departure from it—East River—First view of Philadelphia—Quakerism—Loungers in Chesnut-street—West's picture—Almshouse and hospital—Regularity of the town—Characteristics of its inhabitants.

I SHALL not attempt any minute description of New York. The local situation of the town, the number of churches it contains, a list of the principal streets, and other information of the same sort, would be uninteresting to most readers. I shall therefore speak only of what concerns the inhabitants of the city.

The first thing that strikes a stranger, on en-

tering New York, is the appearance of the people who fill the streets, and the number of blacks that are to be seen every where. The labouring classes look comfortable and independent; and dress so well, that one would suppose them to be respectable tradesmen, rather than people who hire themselves by the day. One rarely meets with beggars or distressed objects; nor does he see any loungers, the genteelest persons having an air of haste and business about them. Many of the blacks carry walking-canes, and parade the streets arm in arm, bowing most affectedly to the negresses, who are often dressed in a style so costly, that it is difficult to conceive how they can procure such finery.

Broadway is the principal street in the city. It is nearly two miles long and very irregular; but contains many excellent houses, which are occupied by persons of wealth and fashion. Shops of almost every kind line Broadway, and display all that can please the eye or attract the attention; but within narrow compass, for most of the warehouses are small. There are likewise many little recesses on each side of the street, where soda water, aerated mead, &c. are retailed in glassfuls; and the tasteful decorations of these places, the inviting fruits and sweetmeats which they exhibit, and the prettiness of the women

who attend, seldom fail to induce passengers to enter.

Broadway is the fashionable promenade during summer; and at sunset vast crowds of people frequent it, who continue to walk long after dark. Here, one may form an estimate of the beauty and personal graces of the people of New York. The ladies do not show a great deal of either, being generally without bloom, dark-complexioned, and irregular in their features; but many of them have expressive black eyes, and figures which would be called fine, if their motions and attitudes were less stiff and ungraceful. They dress very much in the French style, but display more extravagance than taste in their toilette arrangements: I am told they also imitate that nation in the frequent use of rouge, which, combined with the destructive effects of a climate very much in extremes, sufficiently accounts for the premature appearance of age, which overtakes them before an Englishwoman has come to her prime. The men have personal defects similar to those of the women; and are moreover too spare in habit, and too large-boned, to be elegant. However, they dress well, avoiding the extreme of foppishness, and at the same time not neglecting fashion. None of the American young men have that as-

pect of idiotic stupidity which is frequent among the *exquisites* of Britain; and though the Americans are far inferior in elegance of manner, they surpass them in good sense and energy of mind.

The principal hotels are situated in Broadway; and, as they differ entirely from British hotels, it is worth while to say something about them. The City Hotel is the best and most fashionable place of resort for travellers. It is a large brick building, four storeys high, containing a splendid dining saloon, and a magnificent drawing-room, each 85 feet in length, a billiard-room, several suites of apartments for private families, and more than 100 bedchambers. Upwards of 80 people breakfast and dine there every day, at the public table, during the summer months; and the charge for board and lodging is ten dollars a-week, for which four meals a-day are furnished in the best possible style. At the City Hotel, a traveller neither has it in his power to dine alone, nor to have private apartments, but must take his seat at the ordinary, at the established hours. Travelling parties, consisting of ladies and gentlemen, cannot even obtain separate sitting apartments, but must either remain in the bedchambers, or mingle together in a drawing-room allotted for their reception. They are all expected to dine at the same table and at the same hour; or, if any party chooses to deviate from this

plan, the charge is more than double what it would otherwise be. Washington-hall, Franklin-house, Mechanics'-hall, Wall-street-house, and nearly all the other public establishments for travellers, are conducted in this style; which is evidently but little adapted to the taste of Europeans, who generally choose privacy when they reside at a hotel. The Americans, however, are not so fastidious; and many of them would be at a loss to conceive why a man should wish to take his meals alone, when he might command a greater variety of dishes by sitting down among the multitude.

The persons who encircle these *table d'hotes* are, for the most part, genteel in their appearance, and polite in their manners. Many of them are permanent residenters in New York, and merely board at a hotel for convenience. The conversation never becomes general; as no one addresses those who sit round him, unless he has been particularly introduced to them. When any person wants part of a dish, he sends the waiter for the whole of it, as no one troubles himself with carving for another. Every thing that is drunk is charged *extra* to the individual that calls for it; but most of the guests take nothing but water, and the moment they have dined, they start up, and hurry away. The Americans are not at all addicted to the pleasures of

the table, being no judges of good cookery, and dining usually at two or three in the afternoon. Men of business hasten to their counting-houses or offices immediately after dinner, leaving good wine and convivial friends without the least regret. Should they feel inclined to drink a little in the course of the evening, they engage a few acquaintances, and carry them to their homes or boarding-houses; where, having called for some wine, the whole party drink it off as fast as possible, without either sitting down or taking off their hats. This is called a *flying glass*. However, people of wealth and fashion live much in the same way as respectable merchants in England, and have fewer *standing toasts* than their inferiors.

The number of *private* boarding-houses in New York is very great. Few young men have a house and domestic establishment of their own, until they are married, and some not even then. The people who keep these boarding-houses are usually widow ladies, who have been left in destitute circumstances; but most of them are quite superior in manners and respectability, to the same class of persons in Britain. They do not receive any one into their houses, unless he is recommended by a mutual acquaintance. He is then treated as a friend, and enjoys an easy intercourse with the daughters, sisters, or other

members of the family, if he feels inclined; and is allowed to walk out with them, or escort them to public places. A young man will sometimes find a boarding-house rather dangerous, if there are agreeable females in it. Many widows procure husbands for their unportioned daughters, by keeping one; though I do not mean to say, that they ever have this object in view when they receive lodgers. The New York boarding-houses are not agreeable in general; for the social intercourse that takes place in them creates a restraint which would not exist, were there no communication at all between the parties.

The fourth of July, which the Americans celebrate as the anniversary of their national independence, occurred immediately after my arrival in New York. All the shops were shut throughout the town, and Broadway was so crowded with people, that it was hardly possible to pass along. Military and naval officers, tradesmen, common labourers, women, children, free blacks, slaves, and negresses, composed the motley assemblage, who were all dressed in their best apparel, and seemed equally to participate in the exhilarating influence of the happy day. Bands of music paraded the streets, the "star-spangled banner" waved every where, and discharges of musketry resounded at intervals. Two rows of

tents and booths, each about a quarter of a mile in length, occupied the sides of Broadway.—They were chiefly kept by black women, and contained tables, upon which roast pigs, roast turkeys, fowls, ham, pies, tarts, fruit, sweetmeats, and cakes, were placed in an inviting manner; while chairs and benches stood vacant, ready for the accommodation of passengers. It was amusing to observe the blacks handing the negresses to these tables, and asking, with a profound bow, what they would choose to be helped to. The day was intensely hot, yet I saw several of these dark brunettes devouring platefuls of roast pig, ham, and cabbage, and drinking rum and water out of tin jugs of formidable dimensions. Many tradesmen, women, and children likewise, enjoyed a good dinner at these refectories, and paid but a trifle for it. The bawling of the black women, their incessant invitations to the passengers, the clattering of knives and plates, the uncouth dialect of the negro men, the laughter of the bye-standers, the gaudy dresses of the booth-keepers, and the extraordinary groups that filled the streets, composed a spectacle very grotesque and amusing. At twelve o'clock the military paraded in the Grand Square in Broadway, and fired a *feu de joie*. The different public societies, who had previously assembled in the City Hall, then walked in procession to their

respective places of resort; and among them I observed the celebrated Tammanies, "a motley crew," with buck-tails in their hats, and looking as if they thought more of the good dinner that awaited them, than of politics or national independence.

It is not possible for any festival to diffuse more general satisfaction, than this anniversary of independence appeared to do among the Americans;—a gloomy or discontented countenance was not to be seen. Notwithstanding the mixed multitudes that were wandering in idleness through the city during the whole day, no riot or disorder took place; and when night was a little advanced, all parties voluntarily and quietly dispersed.

The tumultuousness of mobs in the streets is, indeed, rare among the Americans. They are not so easily led astray as the lower classes in Britain; being better informed, and more cool and deliberative in their mental constitution. They would not feel any satisfaction in breaking the windows of the President's house, or insulting him personally, however much he had offended them.

It was, as already observed, the middle of summer when I arrived in New York; and at that time the wealthiest people are out of town.—Most of the places of public amusement were,

of course, closed. These consist of a theatre, a circus, Vauxhall Gardens, a museum, where concerts take place, the Pavilion, an academy of fine arts, dancing assemblies, and several galleries of paintings.

Their regular theatre was burnt down in the spring of 1820, and that which I visited was merely a temporary one. The actors were no better than third or fourth rate, and the scenery and decorations corresponded in meanness, but were, I was told, very much inferior to those that the fire had destroyed. The ladies and gentlemen, who occupied the boxes, did not appear in full dress; and the latter generally sat with their hats on. Though the play was pathetic and affecting, I could not discover the least symptom of feeling in any of the faces around me; and this observation harmonized with the idea I had previously formed, of the total insensibility of the American people to all the finer sources of emotion.

I had no opportunity of attending the circus; neither was the pavilion open. It is a building appropriated to concerts of military music. Vauxhall Gardens are a most contemptible and ludicrous imitation of those in London. The music is detestable, and the illuminations are only fit to decorate the exterior of a puppet-shew.

The American museum, so called, is the pro-

perty of a private individual; but occupies a large building that was erected by the state legislature, as a national depository for antiquities, rarities, and curiosities; but the American *sçavans*, it would appear, could find nothing to put in it, and it was accordingly let to a *virtuoso*, named Scudder, who, among a great quantity of trash, has collected some exquisite specimens of birds and amphibia, and a few valuable minerals. The walls of one apartment are covered with a series of paintings, which represent American naval achievements, and are executed in a style which makes me suppose that the artist received no remuneration, except a *per centage* on the price of the colours he expended in the work. The museum also contains a wax exhibition, in which the solemn scriptural event of the witch of Endor raising the ghost of Samuel, is represented as large as life. She is seated in an elbow-chair, and dressed like an old English housekeeper. Saul's apparel consists of a laced coat, a vest with large flaps, tight breeches and buckles, and silk stockings, while the unfortunate ghost is shrouded in cotton, and wears one of Richardson's patent elastic nightcaps. The museum is also enriched with that astonishing piece of musical mechanism called the Apollino. Concerts are performed upon this instrument, and a few others, almost every evening; and are frequented by the milli-

ners; merchants' clerks, governesses, and old maids of New York.

The gallery of the academy of fine arts is for the reception of the productions of native painters only; and, of course, presents nothing very interesting. The works of American artists are, in general, insipid, and monotonous in design and colouring. However, Messrs Waldo and Jewitt succeed tolerably well in portraits; and some person, whose name I do not recollect, shows a good deal of genius in landscape.

The native painter most highly esteemed among them at present is Colonel Trumbull. Government has engaged that gentleman to execute a series of national pictures for the decoration of the Hall of Congress, for every one of which he is to receive the sum of 4000 dollars. Last summer he had finished two, the subjects of which are, the declaration of independence, and the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. The last I saw while in New York; but was greatly disappointed in finding its merits much inferior to what I had anticipated. Colonel Trumbull is the most lady-like painter in the world; his colours appear to be laid on with the utmost timidity; he shows as much aversion to strong shadows as the Chinese do; and his faces have an expression of red-cheeked stupidity about them, which denotes a corresponding want

of soul in the artist. However, in justice to Colonel Trumbull, it ought to be stated that his subject is an unfortunate one. The picture represents the French and American armies drawn out in lines opposite to each other, and surveying the British, who march between them, deprived of the honours of war; and surely no object can be farther from ideal beauty than soldiers standing stiff in their ranks, and dressed in pipe-clayed breeches, white belts, and black gaiters. Had the colonel put a row of poplar trees (which, by the bye, the Americans admire very much,) parallel to each of the armies, the composition and expression of his picture would have been complete.

Besides the public amusements I have already mentioned, New York, during the summer, affords others chiefly calculated for the lower classes. These are gardens, where vocal and instrumental concerts, on a small scale, are performed almost every evening. To Chatham Garden, the most respectable of these, there is admission *gratis* to all persons of decent appearance; only it is expected that most of the company will call for ice creams, punch, or some other trifle, as, upon the profits derived from the sale of such articles, the support of the establishment depends. It is a place of agreeable resort for mechanics and tradesmen, after they have finished their day's

work; it is the means of keeping them out of taverns, and renders them careful about their dress and deportment, lest they should be refused admission. Persons of this description will take their wives to Chatham Garden, perhaps twice a week, and treat them to the little luxuries that the place affords, without finding themselves much out of pocket at the end of the season. An establishment of this kind would not answer in any of the large towns in Britain, the labouring people there being too poor to support it, and too riotously inclined to submit to the necessary regulations.

However, I have forgot to mention an elegant summer amusement, called the "Steam-boat cotillion parties." One of the small steam-boats, that ply upon the East River, is occasionally engaged for an evening, to make an excursion round the islands opposite New York. Any genteel person gets on board for half a dollar. At the appointed hour the vessel leaves the pier, and the company are entertained with a vocal and instrumental concert till sunset. The decks are then cleared for dancing, and for a military band. Cotillions, quadrilles, and waltzes, are danced in the cool moonlight, and continue till perhaps ten in the evening, when the people are landed at the place where they embarked. These parties, as may be supposed, are frequented chief-

ly by young persons. They are convenient for lovers who cannot meet but by making assignations; for the Americans, notwithstanding their mental apathy, do not hesitate to acknowledge the conjoined influence of music and pretty women, when heard and seen in the stillness of moonlight.

On the festival of the fourth of July, I had an opportunity of seeing a considerable number of the American regular troops. Their appearance was far from being either very warlike, well-disciplined, or respectable; and they went through their manœuvres with an awkwardness that was rather surprising, when one considered the service they had already seen. In fact, the commissioned officers of the American army differ very much from the same class of people in most countries, being chiefly mechanics, tradesmen, and persons of no education or station in society. The military are held in little estimation by the public; hence it is evident, that a body of individuals must be respected, before it can become respectable. During the Canadian war, the better part of the nation evinced a great unwillingness to inlist in the service; and government, in order to augment the land forces, was obliged to take all who offered themselves, and grant commissions to many whose characters and rank in life did not entitle them to such a distinction; besides,

the republican ideas of the Americans respecting the equality of persons and employments, likewise rendered them, in some measure, indifferent about the pretensions of those whom they placed on the staff. A gentleman in Upper Canada told me an incident which illustrates this last observation. In the course of the war, he and his party surprised a small detachment of the enemy's force, and captured them. There were several officers among them, one of whom, a major, requested an interview with my informant, and stated, that, being now a prisoner, he hoped he would be treated with respect, for he kept one of the largest taverns in Connecticut!—But the military college, that has recently been established at West Point, will be the means of rendering the American army as respectable as any in the world. A young man cannot get admission into that seminary, without much interest and an unimpeachable character; and there he has an opportunity of acquiring every species of knowledge that is suited for the profession of a soldier. The number of pupils received at this establishment is limited, lest a military spirit should be too extensively diffused among the people.

The navy is the national establishment which the Americans foster with the greatest care, and view with most affection; and they may well do so, for they have received infinite benefits from its

services; and have reason to be proud of the discipline and perfection which their maritime force at present displays. The young naval officers are most respectable, and gentlemanlike in their deportment and appearance; and would put to shame our contemptible little midshipmen, many of whom are hardly able to carry the little toy swords that are tied round their waists. No one is allowed to enter the naval service of the United States, until he has attained the age of eighteen; is able to give proofs of an unspotted character, and shews a proficiency in all the most important branches of education. Every commander of a vessel is bound to make annual reports to government, concerning the conduct of the officers on board his ship; and should he note any one as guilty of great immorality, unwarrantable dissipation, or mean behaviour,—the culprit is censured, or dismissed the service, according to the magnitude of his offence. It is evident that this plan is well calculated to render the navy fit for *real* gentlemen, and to prevent it from becoming a place of refuge for every prodigal, blockhead, or vagabond who chooses to enter its lists.

There are a considerable number of booksellers in New York, most of whom are also publishers; but the works they issue are printed in an inferior style, and often abound with typographical

errors. Mr Eastburn is the chief bookseller in the city; and he also keeps an establishment called the *Literary Rooms*, where newspapers and periodical publications, American and British, and a tolerably good library, are constantly at the command of subscribers, who do not, however, appear to frequent the place much, except to peruse the daily journals. The inhabitants of New York are too deeply engaged in commerce to read much; but there is evidently some demand for books, the most popular productions that issue from the English press being usually republished in that city, or in Philadelphia. The works of Scott, Byron, the Ettrick Shepherd, and Anacreon Moore, the Tales of my Landlord, Mrs Opie's Novels, and books of a similar description, meet with a ready sale; but Coleridge and Wordsworth, and the other poets of the Lake school, are unknown.

The Edinburgh Review is re-printed at Boston, and has still an extensive circulation. The Quarterly is much read; but the Americans complain, that they are treated in it with too great severity. This, however, is only their own opinion, which must be imputed to national feeling. Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine is in great repute in the United States, though I suspect its readers there do not understand many of the allusions contained in its pages.

New York contains a great many circulating libraries; and the terms upon which books are lent seem characteristic of those who borrow them, the person who takes out a volume being obliged to pay for a week's use of it, though he may choose to read the whole in three hours. This custom is easily explained, by referring to the slowness with which most Americans peruse any work. A merchant will come home from his counting-house at nine in the evening, and take up the last novel or poem, and, after reading a few pages, he will begin to yawn, then complain of a headache, smoke a segar, drink some brandy and water, and go to bed. It would not do for a person who reads in this manner to borrow books by the night.

The New York press teems with several periodical works; but they are unworthy of criticism, being chiefly filled with extracts from English magazines and reviews; and the native effusions which they occasionally contain are such as would not do credit to any country. The American press, however, sends forth many novels, most of which seem remarkable for poverty of incident, feebleness of conception, and a want of knowledge of the world; and their poetry has no more resemblance to real poetry, than toast and water has to Madeira wine.

The want of literary talent among the Ameri-

cans is not disgraceful to them, when it is considered how much else they have had to do. Some of the nations of Europe have less literature than the United States; and even not much more than half a century has elapsed, since the Scotch had any pretensions to the name of an intellectual people. Many persons conceive that the inhabitants of the United States, being originally from Britain, should retain a portion of the literary spirit which distinguishes that country; but when one considers who the emigrants were, it seems very doubtful whether they carried any thing across the Atlantic, except their own persons.

It is evident, from the general character of the Americans, that the society in New York cannot be of a very refined or elegant description. As yet there appears to be but little feeling of aristocracy among the rich; for people in moderate circumstances associate freely and indiscriminately with the most affluent, provided they are of respectable family and profession. I believe there is at present as much equality to be found in America as can exist in civilized society.

I conceive New York to be an agreeable place of residence, particularly to individuals of narrow fortunes, every thing there being cheap, except house rent, which was declining fast when I left the city. Some persons might not, perhaps, meet with the kind of society they valued most;

but every other enjoyment would be within their reach; and the communication which exists between New York and all the rest of the world renders correspondence, whether literary, political, epistolary, or commercial, as easy and frequent as could be desired.

I shall now give a sketch of Philadelphia. I quitted New York at noon, in a small steamboat called the Olive-branch, which plies upon the East River. The scene which displayed itself, as we receded from the city, was exquisitely beautiful. The houses of the town gradually became indistinguishable from each other, and at last appeared as a black cloud, from which many spires shot into the clear blue atmosphere above; while the tumult upon the quays, the dashing of the oars in the harbour, and the bustle of unmooring vessels, slowly died away; and we soon saw nothing but a confused forest of masts, and thousands of pennants floating in the breeze. The north battery, surrounded with trees and verdure, continued longest in sight, and detained the eyes, until the broad expanse of the East River, bordered with luxuriant champaign banks, made the spectator transfer his attention from objects of art to the beauties of nature.

There were crowds of passengers on board, and among them several young ladies, who, as appeared from their conversation, had never been

in a steam-boat before. At one time, they praised the scenery in passionate terms of delight—the next moment wondered how deep the river was—then repeated verses about the blue sky—asked the captain if steam was made from coals or water—criticised an essay on enthusiasm that had appeared in the Ladies' Literary Cabinet, and finished with exclaiming, "Oh, if the boilers should burst!"

The banks of the East River presented the finest specimen of cultivated American scenery I had hitherto beheld. They are chiefly low, but being diversified with little eminences, and covered with villas and pretty farm-houses, their aspect is destitute of uniformity. They afford a place of summer retirement to the inhabtiants of New York. The river abounds with fish, and is well suited for pleasure sailing; while the neighbouring country contains a good deal of game; and lies under the influence of a climate which, during summer and autumn, is as fine as can be desired.

In about three hours we reached the village of Amboy, which is thirty miles from New York; and abandoned the steam-boat there, that we might proceed over land to the Delaware river. Several stage-coaches were in waiting to receive us, and we were driven on, at the rate of seven miles an hour, through the most beautiful inland

country I had yet seen in the United States. We were now in Pennsylvania; and I could almost fancy I saw the celebrated and virtuous Penn looking down from heaven, with complacency, upon the happy consequences that had resulted from his colonizing exertions.

In the course of the afternoon, we passed the small towns of Kingston, Queenston, and Princeton, the latter of which contains a theological college, where young men are educated for the church.—There is scarcely any pulpit eloquence in America; for the character of the people is unfavourable to its existence.

We passed the night at the town of Trenton, and embarked in another steam-boat next morning. She went at the rate of ten knots an hour, and we reached Philadelphia early in the forenoon. This town has at first sight a very imposing appearance, as it stretches, in magnificent extent, along the side of the Delaware, and displays an unbroken aggregate of buildings, which are remarkable for their neatness and regularity. Ships of every description lie at anchor in the river, and give the city a commercial and busy aspect. At the time of our approach, the scene was very animated. Seven steam-boats lay in the harbour, some of which had just arrived, while others were preparing to depart. The hissing of the steam as it issued from the valves

of the engines, the tolling of the bells to hasten passengers on board, the bustle they made upon the wharfs, and the thundering of the ship-builders' hammers, all occupied and confused the ear; while the passing and repassing of ferry-boats, the public baths floating on the river, and vessels bearing up under full sail, equally attracted the eyes of the spectator.

No two cities, within a hundred miles of each other, can differ more than New York and Philadelphia. The latter has far less appearance of bustle in it than the former; and the people one sees in its streets are even more sedate and respectable in their looks, than the same class of persons in New York. Philadelphia contains no street that equals Broadway in splendour and variety; but it possesses some superior in regularity and elegance. Chesnut Street, which is the finest and most fashionable part of the city, comprehends many divisions that will bear a comparison with the best parts of the New Town of Edinburgh, and the interior of the houses is proportionably tasteful and commodious. The High Street is the great place of business; and in it is a market, which, I suppose, for the quantity and variety of articles it affords, is not exceeded by any in the world: being about half a mile long, and containing divisions for butcher meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, fruit, and country produce.

The public buildings of Philadelphia are small, and so plain in their architecture, that they seem allied to Quakerism, and attract little attention from strangers. I was shown the house which the nation built for their illustrious Washington, in which he declined residing, as it was too splendid for him.

In the evening I strolled to Chesnut-Street, which, in Philadelphia, is the place of fashionable promenade during the summer. As I passed through the adjoining part of the town, I every where saw the Quakers, surrounded by their families, sitting out of doors, and enjoying the cool breeze. The old men, with their broad-brimmed hats and large skirts, and their wives dressed in plain bonnets, handkerchiefs, and white muslin gowns, had such an aspect of conjugal affection and domestic comfort, that I surveyed them with the deepest pleasure, and could not help reflecting upon the consistency of character which this sect have at all times preserved.

When I reached Chesnut Street, I found it crowded with people. The Philadelphia ladies are prettier and more genteel than those of New York; though the Quaker garb, which many of them assume, is unfavourable for the display of their attractions. Many of them have beautiful complexions, and walk very gracefully. The young men are altogether inferior to the New

York *dandies*, both in their persons and style of dress.

Next morning I went to see the celebrated picture of Christ healing in the temple, which Mr West painted, and sent as a donation to the Pennsylvania hospital. It is impossible to survey this magnificent performance without a feeling of awe, which the mere recollection of its beauties and expression never fails to revive. It is kept for public exhibition, in a small building erected expressly for the purpose, according to a plan given by Mr West, who seems to have been fully aware of the value of his gift, for which he several times refused 7000 guineas. He gave instructions that no other picture should be hung in the apartment, and that no visitor should be allowed to take a sketch of his painting. Some time ago, the directors of the hospital engaged a Philadelphian artist to make a drawing of the picture, that they might be able to publish a print, and promised him 400 dollars for his trouble; but, after toiling three weeks, he found that his work was not half completed, and he accordingly abandoned the design, and lost both his labour and the expected remuneration. The painting contains fifty-four heads, twenty-one of which have full-length and half-length figures attached to them; and the variety of expression, and intricacy of grouping, in the representation

of so many persons, sufficiently account for the difficulty which the American artist experienced in endeavouring to sketch them. The exhibition of West's painting yielded 8000 dollars the first year, and 5000 the second; and it is supposed, that it will hereafter afford to the hospital an annual revenue of £500 sterling.

In the course of the day I visited the alms-house and hospital of Philadelphia, in company with one of the directors of these institutions. —The former is an establishment for destitute poor, and contains a considerable number of infirm old women; as also many foundlings and orphans, for whom there is a nursery. The building has every convenience attached to it, and its inmates appear to live well and to be contented. The hospital is an elegant edifice, and has a beautiful court-yard in front, where lemon and orange trees, and the finest plants, grow in tasteful profusion. In the middle of it is a statue of William Penn, which I could not pass without veneration. The hospital is capable of containing 900 patients, besides lunatics; all of whom pay three dollars and a half per week when their circumstances admit of it; for which sum they receive every comfort that could be obtained in a private house. Poor and destitute people are admitted *gratis*, and most liberally treated. The hospital has a delightful garden attached to it,

besides a place of recreation for those who labour under mental derangement; and twenty cows, three horses, and a couple of gigs, for the use of valetudinaries.

A splendid view of Philadelphia may be seen from the top of the almshouse, which is much elevated above the surrounding buildings. The regularity of the city (in which there is only one spire), is there particularly visible to the observer; all the streets lying at right angles with each other, though the town is nearly circular in its general form. The plan according to which the streets of Philadelphia are laid out and named is such, that a total stranger may enter the city, and easily find the individual house wanted, without asking directions or information from any one, if he has merely a card containing the address of the person he is in search of. Philadelphia is justly celebrated for the quietness, piety, and morality of its inhabitants. The higher classes are better informed and more refined in their manners than those of New York, and entertain fewer national prejudices. The lower ranks appear to have a remarkable respect for religion and propriety of conduct; and I believe that crimes and violations of the law are more rare in Philadelphia than in any other city of equal population in the world.

THE END.

Oliver & Boyd, Printers, Edinburgh.

00084564

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016